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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



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## **DOI In The News**

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### **Secretary Of Interior Ryan Zinke Visits Austin To Talk Harvey.**

The [Austin \(TX\) American Statesman](#) (9/23, Goldenstein) reports that "about 16,000 Texans are

still displaced and living in hotels and other temporary housing because of Hurricane Harvey, federal officials said Saturday." Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke on Saturday came to Austin to "visit the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Joint Information Center and receive a department update on relief efforts at a local U.S. Geological Survey office." Zinke said "that recovery will be a 'marathon, not a sprint,' that lasts for years." He said, "This is going to take a long time for recovery. I would say we're probably at 20 percent."

### **Hunting Is Down In The US. The Trump Administration Wants To Change That.**

[CNN](#) (9/22, Green) reports on the Interior Department's efforts to promote hunting and fishing on public lands. The article notes that "a US Fish and Wildlife Service survey released last week found that there are 2.2 million fewer hunters in America now than in 2011." According to the article, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's "passion for expanding hunting rights on public lands is both personal and political." However, "despite Zinke's clear efforts to woo hunters and anglers, not all of his decisions have gone over well with the conservationist-minded group." One example is "Zinke's leaked recommendations to the White House to shrink the boundaries of national monuments and open up some of the land to the fossil fuel industry and loggers."

Also reporting are [NPR](#) (9/23, Simon), the [Morristown \(NJ\) Daily Record](#) (9/24, Stabile), the [Orangeburg \(SC\) Times And Democrat](#) (9/25), the [Nevada \(MO\) Daily Mail](#) (9/22, White), and the [New Bedford \(MA\) Standard-Times](#) (9/23, Folco).

### **All-out Effort To Save Forests, Reduce Fuels Urged.**

The [Payson \(AZ\) Roundup](#) (9/22, Aleshire) reports that "nearly 50,000 wildfires have burned 8 million acres across the country so far this year, prompting Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke to order the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to give thinning, fuel reduction and forest restoration projects top priority." Zinke said, "This administration will take a serious turn from the past and will proactively work to prevent forest fires through aggressive and scientific fuels reduction management to save lives, homes and wildlife habitat. It is well settled that the steady accumulation and thickening of vegetation in areas that have historically burned at frequent intervals exacerbates fuel conditions and often leads to larger and higher-intensity fires. These fires are more damaging, more costly, and threaten the safety and security of both the public and firefighters."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Payson \(AZ\) Roundup](#) (9/22).

### **New BLM Pilot Approach Uses Outcome-based Grazing.**

The [Ruidoso \(NM\) News](#) (9/22) reports that "officials with the Bureau of Land Management announced a new initiative this week to provide grazing permit holders an unprecedented level of flexibility in the management of livestock while also protecting the public lands." Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said in the release announcing the program, "Farmers and ranchers know the wildlife and the land they work better than anyone, it only makes sense that we would enlist them in conservation efforts. One of my top goals is for the government to be a better neighbor, land manager, and partner. I think it's a great step in that direction. I applaud the team at BLM for coming up with this innovative program."

Additional coverage was provided by [KTVN-TV](#) Reno, NV (9/22).

### **Interior Department Likely To Propose Big Changes To Sage Grouse Management Soon.**

The [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (9/23, Richards) reported that a rule meant to prevent the sage grouse bird from going extinct required the bird's habitat to be improved or at least not harmed. The Department of the Interior is likely to propose a new rule. Oil and gas companies fear an arbitrary measuring stick when it comes to a new rule as conversationalists fear that the likely rule may erode "the protections that they fought to include in federal plans." Proposed changes to sage grouse management "would be filed Oct. 30, kicking off a 60-day public comment period."

[Politico Morning Energy](#) (9/22, Adragna) reports that "on the two-year anniversary of the Obama administration deciding the sage grouse didn't warrant Endangered Species Act protection, several dozen local elected Western officials today sent Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke a letter urging him to leave existing protection plans in place." They wrote, "We urge you to listen to us, as well as the governors, ranchers, sportsmen, industry officials, conservationists and other stakeholders who invested years of work into these management plans — and allow those plans to stay intact."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (9/25, Webb).

### **Grand Forks To Host Trump Advisers During North Dakota Petroleum Council Meeting.**

The [Grand Forks \(ND\) Herald](#) (9/23, Baumgarten) reports that the North Dakota Petroleum Council will host its 36th annual meeting on Sept. 26 through 28 at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks. It will "feature more than 20 panelists and speakers, including Vincent DeVito, counselor on energy policy for the U.S. Department of Interior, and Stephen Moore, a policy adviser for Trump."

### **Agencies Begin White House-Mandated Training For Every Fed On Consequences Of Leaks.**

[Government Executive](#) (9/21, Katz) reports that federal employees are starting training on the consequences of leaks. The campaign against "the unauthorized disclosure of unauthorized information," as well as "controlled unclassified information," came at the direction of the White House. National Security Adviser H.R. McMaster "last week sent a directive—subsequently obtained by several media outlets—to all federal agencies demanding they train their employees on the 'serious consequences' of improper leaks of such information by Sept. 22."

### **The Interior Secretary's Favorite Horse, 'Tonto,' Has Been Very Busy.**

[Motherboard](#) (9/22, Emerson) reports on Tonto, the horse that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke rode in to work on his first day in March. The author submitted a public records request to the US Park Police and received "20 pages of documents."

### **Additional Coverage: Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke Proposes Shrinking Monuments.**

Additional coverage of the review of national monuments was provided by [The Atlantic](#) (9/24, Felton), the [National Review](#) (9/25, Pendley), the [Huffington Post](#) (9/22, Brune, Contributor), the [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (9/23, Bare), the [Las Vegas Sun](#) (9/24, Gonzalez), the [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (9/22, Sybert, Petersen), the [Silver City \(NM\) Sun-News](#) (9/19), the [Sidney \(MT\) Herald](#) (9/23, Denowh), the [Palm Springs \(CA\) Desert Sun](#) (9/22, Kim), the [New Bedford \(MA\) Standard-Times](#) (9/23), the [Las Cruces \(NM\) Sun-News](#) (9/24, Dash), the [Colorado Springs \(CO\) Business Journal](#) (9/22, Hazlehurst), the [Salt Lake \(UT\) Tribune](#) (9/22, Gehrke), the [Durango \(CO\) Herald](#) (9/22, Lopez-Whiteskunk), [Business Insider](#) (9/24, Nickelsburg), and [KRWG-FM Las Cruces \(NM\)](#) Las Cruces, NM (9/23, Hendrickson).

### **Additional Coverage: State Receives Federal Grant.**

Additional coverage of the money distributed to states from the Land and Water Conservation Fund was provided by the [Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette](#) (9/24), the [Bedford \(IN\) Times-Mail](#) (9/22), [KTUU-TV Anchorage \(AK\)](#) Anchorage, AK (9/21, Maguire), and [WBKO-TV Bowling Green \(KY\)](#) Bowling Green, KY (9/22).

### **Donald Trump Should Make Camp Nelson A National Monument To Black Soldiers.**

In his column for the [Lexington \(KY\) Herald-Leader](#) (9/22, Eblen), Tom Eblen supports Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's recommendation to elevate the Camp Nelson Civil War Heritage Park to a national monument. Eblen asserts that "it is a natural monument to freedom that should also become a national one."

### **Time Is Running Out To Save The Eisenhower Memorial.**

In a piece for the [Washington Free Beacon](#) (9/24, Meadowcroft) reports, Micah Meadowcroft writes that "a final, superficial design change" to the proposed Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial was approved by the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts Wednesday morning. Meadowcroft says that "if the Gehry design is to be scrapped and something more like a monument and less like a disappointing sculpture garden is to be built, it will be up to Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke to decline to sign off on the project, on his own judgment or by direction of President Trump."

## **Bureau Of Indian Affairs**

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### **Report Uncovers Numerous Safety Violations At Tribal Schools.**

The [Gloucester \(MA\) Times](#) (9/23, Murakami) reports that "16 months after the first of two" General Accounting Office reports, "and six years after Indian Affairs auditors identified problems putting students at risk, the issues persist." The article says that "in another report this month, the GAO said that of 50 recommendations it made in the past two years to fix numerous problems, including student safety issues, only one has been fully implemented." The issues have

"caught the attention of senators., who are vowing to keep the heat on agencies responsible for Native American education, health and economic development."

### **Winnebago Tribe Hoping To Reclaim Land In Iowa.**

The [AP](#) (9/24) reports that "the Winnebago Tribe is hoping to reclaim land in Iowa that was once part of its reservation in northeast Nebraska, but local hunters are concerned they might lose access." Rep. Steve King "introduced a bill earlier this month to transfer the land to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, where it would be held in trust for the tribe." Tribal officials "say they would keep the land as hunting ground and habitat for wildlife."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Sioux City \(IA\) Journal](#) (9/24, Hytrek).

## **Bureau Of Land Management**

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### **Purchase Opens 32,600 Acres Near Coronado Forest To Hiking, Hunting.**

The [Arizona Daily Star](#) (9/24, Windes) reports that "the Interior Department's purchase of a plot of private land will allow public access to 32,600 acres of previously isolated forest land, a move that drew praise from wilderness advocates and hunters alike." The acquisition "announced Wednesday opens up two parcels of public land, one in the Coronado National Forest and one northwest of Safford, that had been inaccessible because they were surrounded by private property." The Bureau of Land Management "worked with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the South Eastern Arizona Sportsmen Club and the Trust for Public Land over several years to acquire the land needed for access."

Also reporting are the [Eastern Arizona Courier](#) (9/23) and the [Havasu \(AZ\) News-Herald](#) (9/21, Windes).

### **Fracking Rule May See Jumbled Comeback As Court Tosses Case.**

[E&F Publishing](#) (9/22, Gilmer) reported that the 10th US Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed a case Thursday over a Department of the Interior fracking rule, which emanated from the Obama Administration. Although the lower court struck down the regulation with a 2016 ruling, the 10th Circuit overturned the lower court's decision allowing the rule to take effect. However, the Trump Administration is working to rescind the regulation. The court dismissed the case without ruling on the main "legal question of whether the federal government has authority over the oil and gas extraction process." The regulation faced opposition after passage wherein "Wyoming and other states argued that it was beyond BLM's authority because the Safe Drinking Water Act put EPA in charge of fracking, and the Energy Policy Act of 2005 subsequently assigned that power to state overseers."

[PennEnergy](#) (9/22, Snow) reported that the court's ruling gained positive responses from those interested in both sides of the case. Independent Petroleum Association of America President Barry Russell said that the "decision confirms what IPAA has advocated all along: Dismissing the appeal would protect independent producers from the uncertainty of whether it was necessary to comply with regulations that are certain to be revoked." Russell also said, "All three judges ruled unanimously that it would be a waste of judicial resources to proceed with this case." Western Energy Alliance President Kathleen Sgamma said, "We're pleased that after today, IPAA and [WEA] are even closer to finally putting BLM's ill-conceived fracking rule to bed." Earthworks Energy Program Director Bruce Baizel said, "this decision is two victories in one. It means BLM can start enforcing a rule to protect water, public health, and communities threatened and harmed by fracking on public lands." Baizel also said, "the second victory...is that in the eyes of the court and the eyes of the Trump administration, the public's land managers have the authority to regulate drilling on the lands the public owns."

[UPI](#) (9/22, Graeber) also reported.

### **BLM Sale In Wyoming Nets \$38.7 Million In Bonus Bids.**

The [AP](#) (9/23) reported that the Bureau of Land Management's oil and gas lease sales in Wyoming brought \$38.7 million in bonus bids. Bids were made on 106,000 acres out of 113,000 Thursday. The bonus bid funds will be split between the federal government and Wyoming. Parcels were offered in Niobrara, Big Horn, Goshen, Sheridan, Washakie, and other counties.

The [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (9/24, Richards) reports that "the news comes on the heels of a push from conservation advocates to rehash the federal leasing program, holding leasees to a higher standard so that oil and gas firms aren't gathering up parcels of land that they don't

intend to drill in a timely manner." The petitioners would "also like royalty rates for production to be in-line with revenue made on state and private land, leasing to cease on lands that do not have a strong potential for oil or gas production, and the minimum leasing bid to be increased."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Casper \(WY\) Star-Tribune](#) (9/22, Richards).

### **Colorado's Wild Horses Face A New Danger On The Range: Trump Budget Cuts.**

The [Denver Post](#) (9/23, McGhee) reports that in Colorado, "rapid population growth of the herds has resulted in ranchers' complaints that the animals consume forage and water needed for cattle; an exploding numbers of horses and burros that challenge the BLM's ability to manage them on and off the range; and anxiety among advocates who fear the government will legalize their slaughter." Advocates claim "contraceptive drugs can halt galloping herd growth, but the BLM says the drugs are difficult to administer and require frequent reapplication." The Trump Administration has "proposed a \$10 million reduction to the government's wild horse management program, a cut that advocates fear will place the horses in jeopardy of wholesale destruction."

### **Rough Edges: Inmates Train Mustangs, Learn Life Lessons At Wyoming Corrections Facility.**

The [Pueblo \(CO\) Chieftain](#) (9/23, Schmelzer) reports on the Honor Farm's mustang program. In 1988, the Department of Corrections partnered with the Bureau of Land Management and "created the mustang program — the second mustang program for inmates established in the country and one of six total in the nation." According to the article, "in the program's 29 years, nearly 1,500 men and 4,000 mustangs and burros have completed the program."

### **Private House On Public Land Causes Problems; Bend Business Owner Buys Home Built Inadvertantly On BLM Land.**

The [Bend \(OR\) Bulletin](#) (9/24, Hamway) reports that "nearly a decade after the co-founders of a prominent Bend biotechnology company inadvertently purchased a private home located on public land, the situation is approaching a conclusion." In 2008, Chuck McGrath and Jennifer Grudzien, co-founders of Grace Bio-Labs Inc., "bought a remote, two-story log home southeast of Prineville." In June, the Bureau of Land Management "sent out a letter requesting public input, the first public step toward resolving the situation." The BLM will "prepare an environmental assessment that examines the benefits of three different options: leaving the land as is, removing the house and other structures, or selling the land to McGrath and Grudzien." Jeff Kitchens, field manager for the Prineville district of the Bureau of Land Management, "said he's hopeful the agency can issue a decision by the end of the year."

### **The Myths Used To Needlessly Delay The Cadiz Water Project, Debunked.**

In a piece published by the [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/22, Hernandez, Rodriguez), Tracy Rafter Hernandez, chief executive of the Los Angeles County Business Federation, and Carlos Rodriguez, chief executive of the Baldy View chapter of the Building Industry Assn. of Southern California, writes that "for nearly a decade, the Cadiz Valley Water Conservation, Recovery and Storage Project, which will create a new water supply for 400,000 people and thousands of jobs, has followed the entire California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review and approval process from start to finish — public comment periods, public hearings, board approvals and litigation, all of which concluded last year, when the 4th District Court of Appeal sustained every approval of the project and concluded that it could be operated safely and sustainably." The authors say "it's disappointing that Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and her allies, including state Assemblywoman Laura Friedman (D-Glendale), continue to perpetuate a series of myths about the Cadiz project as part of a campaign to derail it, including in a recent op-ed article for the Los Angeles Times." The two provide "a few examples of the most common myths." They "urge California's leaders to continue to stand up for jobs, for citizens who need water, and for our state's strong environmental review laws by rejecting sustained efforts to change the rules of the game for Cadiz or any other CEQA-approved project."

### **Methane Rule Delay, Repeal Will Hurt Western Colorado.**

In a guest column for the [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (9/24, Otero) youth Sunday school teacher, youth volunteer coach and outdoor enthusiast Gabriel Otero suggests that "Congressman Scott Tipton continues to vote against the best interests of his constituents." Otero writes that Tipton voted to defund the BLM methane waste prevention rule. The rule "has survived a U.S.

Senate vote to permanently get rid of it and a lawsuit from oil industry trade groups seeking to prevent it from going into effect." Otero states that "oil and gas aren't going away anytime soon, but in the meantime, we must extract them in a responsible and environmentally conscious manner."

## Bureau Of Reclamation

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### Water Bailout?

Colorado River Tribes Pose Statewide Leasing Idea. The [Arizona Daily Star](#) (9/24, Davis) reports on "a complex plan to send tribal water from the Colorado River into Arizona's heartland to support existing residents and future development." The Colorado River Indian Tribes "want to lease more river water than is delivered each year to the city of Tucson to various water agencies, utilities and the feds." But "for that, they want more money than they now make from their alfalfa fields, where the water currently goes." However, "the negotiations are now on hold, partly because of a separate power struggle between the CAP and the Arizona Department of Water Resources that's kept their leaders from speaking to one another."

## Fish And Wildlife Service

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### African Wildlife Protectors Get A Hand In Detective Training.

The [AP](#) (9/23, Brasch) reports that African conservation officers came to Commerce City, Colorado "to train with their U.S. counterparts" at the National Wildlife Property Repository. Coleen Schaefer, a specialist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "led the delegation of 42 conservation officials through the warehouse." During the training at the repository, USFWS IT specialist Mike McCloud "led the delegation through techniques to keep evidence secure and carefully cataloged."

### Scientists: Desert Turtle Endangered, 100 Left In Arizona.

The [AP](#) (9/24, Windes) reports that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced the designation of the Sonoyta mud turtle as endangered last Wednesday, "citing threats from climate change to loss of habitat for the southern Arizona animal, whose numbers are believed to have dwindled to as low as 100 turtles." Steve Spangle, a field supervisor with Fish and Wildlife's Arizona Ecological Services, said in a release announcing the listing, "The Sonoyta mud turtle is clearly in danger of extinction." He added, "Protecting it under the Endangered Species Act will marshal increased attention and the resources needed by our U.S. and Mexican conservation partners to improve and expand its dwindling habitat and populations."

### Nighttime Football Games Return To Kauai After 7 Years.

The [AP](#) (9/23) reports that "an agreement has paved the way for the first nighttime football games during fledgling seabirds season on Kauai in seven years." The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service "signed a deal Friday with Kauai County allowing four night games this football season." according to the article, "the first game was played Friday night, followed by games on Sept. 30, Oct. 7 and Nov. 4."

### More Grizzly Bears Roaming Outside National Parks In Wyoming.

The [AP](#) (9/22, Moen) reports that "a growing number of grizzly bears are moving outside their established habitat in and around Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming, causing more conflicts with humans, according to wildlife managers." The article says that "the conflicts in Wyoming resulted in 39 grizzly bears being captured by state game managers in 2016," and "twenty-two were killed for various reasons, such as a history of problems."

### Monarch Butterflies Might Vanish From Northwest Summers.

The [AP](#) (9/23, Cary) reports that "a study published recently in the journal Biological Conservation documents the steep decline of the population of migrating monarchs in the West." The study "puts the risk at 72 percent that not enough of the monarchs will be migrating in the West within 20 years to sustain the population. In 50 years, the risk is 86 percent." The study was paid for by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "which is considering whether to list the monarch butterfly as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act."

## 64 Walruses Found Dead At Point Lay Haulout.

The [Arctic \(AK\) Sounder](#) (9/22) reports that "dozens of walruses were found dead earlier this month at their seasonal haulout near Point Lay." The article notes that "the findings came just about a day after locals said they saw an airplane they believed to be flying inappropriately over the herd, which comes to shore each year once the sea ice recedes past the continental shelf and it becomes too deep for them to feed." Andrea Medeiros, a spokesperson for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said, "We had heard from the community that they had seen an aircraft flying over the animals at [an altitude] they believed to be too close, and circled the animals. The community is very concerned about these animals when they are onshore and don't want people to disturb them by flying over or trying to approach in any way, like using a boat."

## Senate Environmental Consultation Bill A Classic Case In Overreaction.

In an op-ed for [The Hill](#) (9/22, Super), David A. Super, a professor of law at Georgetown Law, argues that S. 605, the "Litigation Relief for Forest Management Projects Act," would "severely limit environmental review of projects that could badly damage vulnerable wildlife." Super claims that the problem that the legislation is seeking to address is "a small one," and S. 605 is "a classic case of overreaction." Instead, Super says that the sponsors of the bill "should establish reasonable standards for when to reopen environmental consultations."

## Curry: Wildlife Lovers Savor Candy Darter Study Story.

In an op-ed for the [Roanoke \(VA\) Times](#) (9/23, Curry), Tierra Curry, a senior scientist with the Center for Biological Diversity, argues that "the work of closely studying" the candy darter "wouldn't be happening if Americans were not allowed to petition the government to protect rare wildlife and to enforce our country's essential environmental laws like the Endangered Species Act." However, she warns that "some in Congress are working to undermine the Act and its lifesaving protections." She urges voters to tell elected officials that "you care about saving threatened wildlife and the laws that ensure we don't sacrifice the heritage of future generations for short-term economic gains."

## National Park Service

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### Melania Trump Hosts Her First Event In The Garden Michelle Obama Founded.

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Thompson) reports First Lady Melania Trump "held her first event in the White House Kitchen Garden on Friday, donning a plaid shirt and coordinating red gloves to pull up leeks and plant kale along with children from a local Boys & Girls Club." According to the Post, "the garden, which then-first lady Michelle Obama established in 2009 as part of her healthy eating initiative, is closely identified with the previous administration, so Trump's decision to embrace it is noteworthy." The Post adds that the First Lady "hosted 10 children in the garden Friday, a much smaller group than Obama often welcomed, but her gathering, in 80-degree temperatures, felt much like the garden events of the past, with White House chefs and National Park Service staff members on hand." The [CBS Evening News](#) (9/22, story 11, 0:20, Mason) briefly reported "Mrs. Trump told the kids she's a big believer in healthy eating and intends to keep the garden."

Also reporting are the [AP](#) (9/22, Kellman) and [Politico](#) (9/22, Evich).

### Park Service Announces Grant For Giffords Shooting Memorial.

The [AP](#) (9/22) reports that the National Park Service is "giving over \$61,000 for the development of a memorial honoring the victims and survivors of the 2011 Tucson shooting that left six dead and 13 injured, including former U.S. Rep. Gabby Giffords." U.S. Rep. Raul Grijalva "said Friday that the grant will be used for the January 8th Memorial park in downtown Tucson." According to the article, "a foundation set up to take charge of the memorial has spent several years raising money for a \$5 million monument that would include carved symbols along a dark red steel wall, items from makeshift memorials following the shooting and areas to reflect."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Arizona Daily Star](#) (9/24) and [KTAR-FM](#) Glendale, AZ (9/22).

### Glacier Park Plans To Begin Stabilization Efforts On Sperry Chalet In October.

The [Missoulian \(MT\)](#) (9/24, Backus) reports that "stabilization efforts on the four stone walls that remain of the historic Sperry Chalet dormitory are expected to get underway in early October."

However, "for the dormitory to stand a chance of being rebuilt, a park historic preservation crew will have to win the race against upcoming winter conditions to brace the walls with a series of large beams and plywood." Glacier Park spokesperson Lauren Alley said, "We have to be able to protect those walls from both the wind and being pushed sideways by this winter's snowfall. October is our window for getting that work accomplished."

**Sperry Chalet Worth Trying To Rebuild.** In an editorial, the [Daily Inter Lake \(MT\)](#) (9/24) supports efforts to rebuild Sperry Chalet, "the historic backcountry lodge that was destroyed by the Sprague Fire the evening of Aug. 31." The paper acknowledges that "it will be a tall order gathering the money it will take to restore or replace the 103-year-old backcountry building." But it argues that "it makes sense to pursue a rebuild of the lodge."

### **Archaeologists: More Protections Needed For Chaco Region.**

The [AP](#) (9/22, Bryan) reported that Friday researchers, archaeologists, and professors called for additional protections from oil and gas development in the Chaco Culture National Historical Park and a large adjacent area. The scientists said the industry may destroy portions of the landscape, which could assist in understanding ancient civilizations that used to live in the region. Scientists also said they are using new satellite and laser-imaging technology that could allow for more discoveries in the area.

### **All Of Blue Ridge Parkway Open After Irma's Heavy Rains.**

The [AP](#) (9/22) reports that "the entire Blue Ridge Parkway has reopened after the heavy rains of Hurricane Irma forced the closure of some parts of it." The National Park Service "said the last of the debris from the storm was cleared away Thursday at Craggy Gardens near Asheville." The parkway was "open for travel Friday, the first day of fall."

### **Big Cypress, Everglades, State Parks Face Long Recovery.**

The [Naples \(FL\) Daily News](#) (9/24, Staats) reports that Hurricane Irma "mangled Florida's national and state parks, turning places meant to be enjoyed into disaster zones that could take weeks or longer to reopen." The National Park Service has "sent some 380 workers from 95 national parks in 35 states to 15 parks in Irma's path in Georgia, South Carolina, Florida and the Caribbean." At Big Cypress National Preserve, "crews have been clearing downed trees along Turner River Road, which had water too high to access for more than a week after the storm," according to Park Service Ranger Brett Everitt. He "couldn't provide a timeframe for reopening Big Cypress, but the Park Service reported a big step in that direction Friday with the restoration of power in Ochopee and the water plant coming back online."

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (9/25).

### **Cumberland Island Extends Cancellation Of Camping Reservations Through Oct. 11.**

The [Florida Times-Union](#) (9/23, Dickson) reports that "with Cumberland Island National Seashore still closed because of damage from Tropical Storm Irma, the park is extending the cancellation of camping reservations two more weeks through Oct. 11." The National Park Service "said Saturday the docks in St. Marys that are needed for access to the island were badly damaged and that crews are still working on the island itself." The article notes that "the ferries that serve the island were placed in sheltered mooring during the storm and came through undamaged."

### **Park Seeks Wiggle Room On Boundary.**

The [Mount Desert \(ME\) Islander](#) (9/23, Broom) reports that Acadia National Park "wants to be able to make minor adjustments to its boundary without having to get congressional approval." According to the article, "a bill currently inching its way through Congress would validate Acadia's annexation of 1,441 acres on the Schoodic Peninsula, including the Schoodic Woods Campground, in 2015, but it would prohibit any future expansion of the park or other alterations of its boundary." Acadia and National Park Service officials back "the bill but would like for the park to have the same boundary adjustment wiggle room that most other national parks have."

### **10 New U.S. Citizens Take Oath Of Allegiance In Glacier Park.**

[KPAX-TV](#) Missoula, MT (9/24, Miller) reports that "U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services hosted a Naturalization Ceremony in the Apgar Amphitheater on Friday as 10 new citizens from across the world took the Oath of Allegiance." Fridays event was the second Naturalization Ceremony that Glacier National Park has hosted. Glacier National Park's Deputy Superintendent Eric Smith said, "It's really an honor to be part of the process and for that process to take place

here instead of a courtroom. It is a very solemn and formal process that is at the end of a long and arduous process."

### **Officials To Decide Fate Of Peninsula Mountain Goats.**

The [AP](#) (9/23, Bush) reports that this summer, the National Park Service "published four plans for goat management" at Olympic National Park. Park officials have "produced a nearly 500-page document that seemingly examines every angle, secured some funding for goat removal and wrangled other government agencies to participate." Officials "favor capturing as many mountain goats as possible over several years, transporting them to the North Cascades and killing goats that evade seizure."

### **A Good Wildfire On Display At Yosemite National Park.**

The [Fresno \(CA\) Bee](#) (9/22, George) reports that Yosemite National Park officials "aimed to help people better understand wildfire during a Thursday tour of the Empire Fire, which has burned more than 6,300 acres off Glacier Point Road." [KGPE-TV](#) Fresno, CA (9/22, Valera) reports that "Yosemite's fire ecologist Kristen Shive said fires like the Empire Fire are needed to prevent" bigger "fires from happening."

### **Lawsuit Filed To Stop Mining Near Yellowstone In Montana.**

The [U.S. News & World Report](#) (9/22) reports that "opponents of mining near Yellowstone National Park filed a lawsuit Friday challenging a decision by Montana environmental regulators to allow a Canadian company to explore for precious metals just north of the park." The Park County Environmental Council and Greater Yellowstone Coalition "sued the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and Lucky Minerals, Inc. in state district court in Montana's Park County." Lucky Minerals was "given approval to drill on private land in the Absaroka Mountains to assess its prospects for mining of copper, gold, silver and molybdenum deposits."

Additional coverage was provided by [Montana Public Radio](#) (9/22, Cates-Carney).

### **Indiana Dunes Hoping For 'Dark Sky' Designation.**

The [Northwest Indiana Post-Tribune](#) (9/24, Anderson) reports on the effort to get Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore designated as an International Dark Sky Park. Among the supporters of the push are Rep Pete Visclosky, and state House Minority Leader Scott Pelath, "who both wrote letters advocating for the Dunes to receive an International Dark Sky Park designation."

### **Plan For Moccasin Bend National Archaeological District Completed.**

The [Chattanooga \(TN\)](#) (9/22) reports that "a General Management Plan for the Moccasin Bend National Archaeological District received final authorization from the National Park Service." According to the article, "Chickamauga and Chattanooga NMP is looking forward to implementing the plan which includes establishment of a visitor center on Hamm Road, as well as archaeological site protection, guided interpretation, and improved access to the Brown's Ferry site to better interpret the American Indian history of Moccasin Bend."

### **Cabin Restoration Completed At Historic Elkmont In Great Smoky Mountains National Park.**

The [Knoxville \(TN\) News Sentinel](#) (9/22, Ahillen) reports that a National Park Service project is renovating the Elkmont Historic District of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. According to the article, "four structures have been opened this weekend after nearly a year of restoration at the district off Little River Gorge Road." The National Park Service is "working to preserve more than a dozen buildings."

### **Cape Lookout Lighthouse Modernization Completed.**

The [Carteret County \(NC\) News-Times](#) (9/24) reports that "the Coast Guard and National Park Service completed the Cape Lookout Lighthouse solar modernization Friday." The project "involved removing the previous optic, which was powered by a sub-cable, and replacing it with a solar-powered multi-tier LED optic, the Coast Guard said in a press release."

### **Local Residents Recognize Overmountain Men In Ceremony.**

The [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (9/23, Sorrell) reports that "local residents recognized the service of two Revolutionary War veterans from Southwest Virginia on Saturday as Overmountain Victory Trail festivities continue in the region." The two men, Gen. William Campbell and John Broddy,

were "honored during wreath-laying ceremonies." Ben Richardson, of the National Park Service, provided the keynote address Saturday.

### **Adventure Time: Fourth-graders From Joy Elementary Visit Denali National Park.**

The [Fairbanks \(AK\) News-Miner](#) (9/24, Capps) reports that three classes of fourth-graders from a Fairbanks school traveled to Denali National Park "earlier this month, thanks to a grant from the National Park Foundation, submitted by the Alaska Public Lands Information Center in Fairbanks." The grant was part of the National Park Foundation's Every Kids In A Park program.

### **The Washington Monument Will Endure.**

In an op-ed for the [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Lamar), Eric Lamar, a D.C. tour guide, empathizes with visitors who are upset with the closure of the Washington Monument. But he urges those who are "frustrated" to "pause and remember that like the monument, Washington's life was a series of setbacks and defeats requiring fortitude, persistence and no small amount of courage." Lamar concludes: "The Washington Monument may be down for a bit, but like the man, it will endure, stronger for the hardship."

## **Office Of Insular Affairs**

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### **Hurricane Maria Heads North As It Departs Caribbean.**

"Hurricane Maria finally began departing the Caribbean Friday afternoon, leaving a wake of destruction that left at least 30 dead and crippled Puerto Rico," the [Miami Herald](#) (9/22, Staletovich) reports, and in the National Hurricane Center's 5 p.m. advisory, "forecasters said Maria was passing offshore east of the southeastern Bahamas with sustained winds remaining at 125 mph. The storm was located about 395 miles east-southeast of Nassau." Meanwhile, [Reuters](#) (9/22, Graham, Respaut) reports Maria "skirted past the Turks and Caicos Islands on Friday, leaving devastation in its wake that included fresh flooding on Puerto Rico two days after pummeling the U.S. island territory." Reuters adds that "Maria, which ranked as the most powerful hurricane to strike Puerto Rico in nearly a century, has killed at least six people there and claimed 19 lives on several other Caribbean islands, according to government officials and local news media accounts."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/22, story 2, 0:30, Muir) in a brief report tracked "the possible paths for Hurricane Maria as it then moves toward the East Coast." Rob Marciano said Maria is currently "a Cat 3 and will weaken as it gets a little farther north; it'll be a Cat 1 by Wednesday, but just abreast of North Carolina." Marciano added "the forecast cone getting close to the US and our spaghetti models a little bit more spread out, so some uncertainty. And there could be some direct impacts from Maria in the US by the end of next week."

[NYTimes Reflects On Status Of Caribbean Nations After Hurricanes.](#) "After two major hurricanes tore through the Caribbean in less than two weeks, some of the most idyllic – and tourism-dependent – destinations have been devastated," the [New York Times](#) (9/22, Rosenbloom) says, and while "ferocious storms are nothing new to these islands," hurricanes Maria and Irma left "cities, and some islands...almost entirely in ruins." According to the Times, "In the hardest-hit places, including Dominica, Puerto Rico, Barbuda, St. Martin and the U.S. Virgin Islands, a slow and arduous recovery lies ahead." The Times breaks down the status of the various Caribbean nations and highlights that from Maria, "in Puerto Rico, at least 10 people died. The storm brought catastrophic flooding, destroyed homes and infrastructure, and left people without power, clean water and essential services. In Dominica, at least 15 people were killed."

### **Puerto Rico's Governor Says Cost To Rebuild After Marie Will Be More Than \$7 Billion To \$8 Billion.**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/24, De Cordoba) says that while the Puerto Rican government does not yet have an estimate for the cost of reconstruction, Gov. Ricardo Rosselló said it will be "north of the \$7 billion to \$8 billion" cost to rebuild after Hurricane Georges in 1998. The [New York Times](#) (9/24, Robles, Ferré-Sadurní) says Maria left "a rich agricultural region looking like the result of a postapocalyptic drought." Maria "wiped out about 80 percent of the crop value in Puerto Rico – making it one of the costliest storms to hit the island's agriculture industry, said Carlos Flores Ortega, Puerto Rico's secretary of the Department of Agriculture." The storm "took out entire plantations and destroyed dairy barns and industrial chicken coops." According to preliminary figures, the island "suffered a loss of \$780 million in agriculture yields."

Citing Puerto Rico's "\$73 billion in debt," [Axios](#) (9/24, Pandey) says the federal government "will have to take a significant role in the recovery process to give the US territory a chance at bouncing back." [USA Today](#) (9/23, Jervis) reports on the relief efforts of FEMA teams in Puerto Rico in the wake of Hurricane Maria. The teams were already on the island and "sprung into reconnaissance and search-and-rescue missions as soon as Maria's winds died down."

Eva Pilgrim said on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/24, story 6, 1:50, Llamas) that officials across Puerto Rico are "describing conditions as 'apocalyptic.'" David Begnaud said on the [CBS Weekend News](#) (9/24, story 6, 2:10, Quijano), "We're told there are still people in areas of the island that need to be rescued, but they have no way of calling for help."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/24, A1, Schmidt, Achenbach) reports in a front-page story that four days after the storm, "regions outside of San Juan remained completely disconnected from the rest of the island – and the world." As "the challenge of accessing the essentials of modern life – gasoline, cash, food, water – began to sink in" for residents, "government officials had no answers for them. Estimates for the return of electricity and basic services will be measured not in days but in weeks and months." On [NBC Nightly News](#) (9/24, story 5, 2:45, Snow), Gabe Gutierrez reported on "a FEMA search and rescue team from South Florida." Gutierrez said there is "an urgent rush to clear these roads and open up lines of communication. But the more people we speak with, it's clear this recovery won't be measured in weeks, but months, even years."

The [AP](#) (9/24, Coto) says that as authorities worked to assess the damage, Jenniffer González, Puerto Rico's nonvoting representative in Congress, said Sunday that Maria "set the island back decades." González said, "The devastation in Puerto Rico has set us back nearly 20 to 30 years. ... I can't deny that the Puerto Rico of now is different from that of a week ago. The destruction of properties, of flattened structures, of families without homes, of debris everywhere. The island's greenery is gone." The AP adds that federal aid has "begun moving into Puerto Rico, welcomed by local officials who praised the Trump administration's response but called for the emergency loosening of rules long blamed for condemning the US territory to second-class status."

A [New York Times](#) (9/24) editorial urges federal help for Puerto Rico, arguing that while it "cannot vote for president and has no voting representatives in Congress," its citizens "are entitled to the same federal emergency funds and resources that Washington has been funneling to the far more politically powerful and economically resilient states of Texas and Florida in their hurricane miseries."

**Dam Weakened By Maria's Rains Is In Danger Of Failing.** [Reuters](#) (9/24, Graham, Respaut) reports that Guajataca Dam in the northwest of the island was damaged by Maria's heavy rains and was "in danger of bursting at any time." With around 70,000 people living downstream from the dam, Gov. Rosselló "reiterated his request on Saturday that people leave the area as soon as possible." However, [USA Today](#) (9/24, Dorell) reports that according to local officials, the dam "is holding and unlikely to threaten the lives of all 70,000 people ordered to relocate." Juan Morales Vega, public security director in the town of Isabela, "said the Guajataca dam in Quebradillas continues to hold despite reports of a fissure and partial breach, according to local paper *El Vocero de Puerto Rico*." Carlos Román, the special assistant to the executive director of the Center for Emergency Management in Quebradillas, "told *El Vocero* that alerts for the towns of Isabela and Quebradillas were overblown."

**Tropical Storm Watches Issued For North Carolina, Virginia Coasts.** [ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/24, story 7, 0:40, Llamas) reported that Maria is currently "a Category 2 storm, about four hundred miles southeast of Cape Hatteras." The [Washington Post](#) (9/24, Porter) reports that Maria is "still expected to remain off shore but sideswipe coastal locations with tropical storm conditions beginning on Tuesday," and "tropical storm watches have been issued for the entire North Carolina coast and parts of the extreme southern end of the Virginia coast."

### **'We Need Help': U.S. Virgin Islands Governor On Devastation After Maria And Irma.**

[WBUR-FM](#) Boston (9/21) reports that U.S. Virgin Islands Governor Kenneth Mapp talked about the recovery effort following the passage of Hurricane Maria. Mapp said, "We need help. With our FEMA partners and our cruise ship partners, we're bringing in a lot of food, water, tarpaulins, personal hygiene packs, cots and blankets. That's really the immediacy of the need. We're asking folks who can to go to USVI Recovery and they can donate there." He added, "I was able to speak to our Administrator William Brock Long of FEMA, and had a very good conversation with him, as well as the Secretary of Interior Ryan Zinke, as we coordinate the relief for St. Croix."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Virgin Islands Daily News](#) (9/21, O'CONNOR), and the [Allentown \(PA\) Morning Call](#) (9/21).

## Media Analyses: Trump Raising Rhetoric Against North Korea.

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/24, story 4, 2:10, Llamas) reported that the "volley of insults" between President Trump and North Korea has reached "an alarming level." On Saturday, Trump [tweeted](#), "Just heard Foreign Minister of North Korea speak at UN. If he echoes thoughts of Little Rocket Man, they won't be around much longer!" That tweet followed North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho "slamm[ing]" Trump at the UN, calling him "a mentally deranged person" who "committed an irreversible mistake." [USA Today](#) (9/24, Cummings) similarly reports that Trump "sent another belligerent tweet directed at North Korea Saturday night," referring to Ri's remarks at the UN. USA Today says the President "has been engaged in an escalating war of words with North Korea and its leader."

[Reuters](#) (9/24, Choi, Nichols) says the President "dialed up the rhetoric against North Korea again at the weekend" as he Kim Jong-un "have traded increasingly threatening and personal insults." Analysts say the "escalation in rhetoric is increasing the risk of a miscalculation by one side or the other that could have massive repercussions." John Dickerson said on the [CBS Weekend News](#) (9/24, story 3, 2:15, Quijano), "The tension, of course, is one of the ways the US thinks it might get the North Koreans to the negotiating table – if the North Koreans take seriously the overwhelming force the US could deploy, if things got to a military pass."

A front-page [New York Times](#) (9/24, A1, Davis) analysis says Trump's "willingness to casually threaten to annihilate a nuclear-armed foe was yet another reminder of the steep risks inherent in his brute-force approach to diplomacy." However, it has also "led to a deep uncertainty about whether Mr. Trump is all talk or actually intends to act. The ambiguity could be strategic, part of an effort to intimidate Mr. Kim and keep him guessing. Or it could reflect a rash impulse by a leader with little foreign policy experience to vent his anger and stoke his supporters' enthusiasm."

Toluse Olorunnipa of Bloomberg News said on [CNN's Inside Politics](#) (9/24), "It does not seem like they're trying to dial things back. It seems like both President Trump and the leader of North Korea are trying to ratchet things up as much as possible. Both have sort of fragile egos, egos that they believe have been challenged by one another and the President seems to be wanting to move that forward and ratchet things up significantly."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/24, Morello), meanwhile, reports that other US officials "were more restrained in their words Sunday." Treasury Secretary Mnuchin "repeated the insistence that all options, including military force, remain on the table," but "lingered more on discussing how he has greater authority to punish countries, companies and individuals who trade with North Korea under an executive order signed by Trump last week. And he downplayed the likelihood of nuclear war." Mnuchin said on and [ABC's This Week](#) (9/24, Radatz), "The President doesn't want to be in a nuclear war. And we will do everything we can to make sure that doesn't occur." On [CNN's State Of The Union](#) (9/24, Tapper), Mnuchin said the executive order signed last week by the President "gives the Treasury more authorities than we've ever had before" by allowing for us to "block many transactions with anybody that does trade or other significant business with North Korea." [Reuters](#) (9/24) also reports Mnuchin's comments Sunday.

According to the [Washington Post](#) (9/24, Denyer), "The view from China could hardly be much worse: the leaders of North Korea and the United States threatening to rain down total destruction on each other, while US bombers and fighters stage a show of military might close to China's shores." While in public China's foreign ministry "has calmly advocated restraint," experts said Sunday that in private it "is as frustrated with North Korea, and with the situation, as it has ever been."

## US Warplanes Conduct "Show Of Force" Ahead Of North Korean Official's UNGA Address.

Leading the [CBS Weekend News](#) (9/23, lead story, 1:25, Ninan), correspondent Reena Ninan reported that "American bombers and fighter jets flew off the coast of North Korea today in a show of force." The flight "was the furthest north of the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea that US warplanes have flown in the 21st century." The Pentagon said the move "was in response to North Korea's, quote, 'reckless behavior.'" Shortly after, North Korean Foreign Affairs Minister Ri Yong Ho, at the United Nations General Assembly, escalated the "war of words" with President Trump. In video footage, Ri asserted, "None other than Trump himself is on a suicide mission."

Calling Ri's address the culmination of "an extraordinary week of militaristic threats from both nations before an organization founded to maintain international peace and security," the [Washington Post](#) (9/23, Morello) reports Ri said Trump's belittling of Kim with the nickname "little

rocketman" rendered "our rockets' visit to the entire U.S. mainland inevitable." He pointed to a hydrogen bomb that can be affixed to an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching the mainland US, and warned, "Trump might not have been aware what is uttered from his mouth, but we will make sure that he bears consequences far beyond his words, far beyond the scope of what he can handle even if he is ready to do so." The Post says the "rhetoric between Trump and Kim has grown exceptionally personal," and the heated exchanges "come at a time when diplomatic pressure may be starting to bear fruit," as Secretary of State Tillerson suggested last week.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/23, Fassihi, Kesling) similarly says Ri's address to the UNGA dampened hopes that North Korea may be open to diplomacy. The Journal says many foreign leaders addressed the North Korean threat in their addresses to the Assembly this week, but the North Korean minister's speech was one of the most anticipated.

[Reuters](#) (9/24) reports that later on Saturday, Trump [tweeted](#), "Just heard Foreign Minister of North Korea speak at U.N. If he echoes thoughts of Little Rocket Man, they won't be around much longer!" Reuters says that it was not apparent "from Trump's latest tweet if he was referring to Ri and Kim, or North Korea more broadly."

**China To Impose Restrictions On Oil, Natural Gas Exports To North Korea.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/23, Chin) reports China's Commerce Ministry said in a late Friday online statement that beginning Jan. 1, it will cap refined petroleum exports to North Korea at two million barrels a year, and prohibit natural gas exports entirely. The ministry announced China will also prohibit North Korean textile imports, a key source of revenue that earned the nation \$760 million last year, according to US officials.

**Seismic Activity Detected Near North Korea's Nuclear Test Site.** The [Washington Post](#) (9/23, Denyer) reports the US Geological Survey detected a 3.5-magnitude earthquake in northern North Korea on Saturday afternoon. The seismic activity was detected near North Korea's known nuclear test site; however, "experts said seismic data suggested that it was probably not caused by a new nuclear test, although it could have been a delayed geological reaction to the last test nearly three weeks ago." Furthermore, there were no reports of radiation detected around the site.

Still, the seismic activity was similar to that detected after North Korea's Sept. 3 underground nuclear test, so when the China Earthquake Administration initially attributed the tremor to a "suspected explosion," the incident "immediately set off alarm bells," the [New York Times](#) (9/23, Sang-Hun) reports. While the tremor appears, at least for now, "to have been a false alarm," as of Saturday afternoon the Chinese agency had not modified its initial assessment. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/23, Chin) reports the US Geological Survey also declined to publicly determine the source of the tremor, saying in a statement that it "cannot conclusively confirm at this time the nature (natural or human-made) of the event." The Korea Meteorological Administration in Seoul, however, offered a different initial assessment: "We have determined that this was caused by a natural earthquake, not a big one at that, and had nothing to do with any explosion."

**US Olympic Committee Addresses Concerns Over North Korean Threat.** In a letter sent to potential Winter Olympic athletes that was obtained by the [AP](#) (9/22, Pells), US Olympic Committee Chief Security Officer Nicole Deal said heightening US-North Korean tensions will likely persist for the foreseeable future, and while they "should not be dismissed as insignificant," they should not be "feared as precursors of an inevitable conflict." The AP says Deal's remarks signal that the US Team is not "considering skipping the Pyeongchang Games for security reasons." In a separate statement issued publicly on Friday, US Olympic Committee chief executive Scott Blackmun asserted, "We will continue to work with our State Department and local organizers to ensure that our athletes, and our entire delegation, are safe." Earlier this week, "France's sports minister suggested the country's athletes would stay home if security could not be guaranteed," prompting the International Olympic Committee to attempt to assuage security concerns.

**WPost A1: Poll Finds Americans More Confident In Military Than Trump On North Korean Crisis.** In a front-page article, the [Washington Post](#) (9/24, Clement, Rucker) reports on a new Washington Post-ABC News poll that found about "three-quarters of the public supports tougher economic sanctions on North Korea in an attempt to persuade it to give up its nuclear weapons, while just about one-third think the United States should offer the isolated country foreign aid or other incentives." The poll also found "37 percent of adults trust Trump either 'a great deal' or 'a good amount' to responsibly handle the situation with North Korea," compared to 72 percent who "trust U.S. military leaders, including 43 percent saying they trust them 'a great deal.'" Confidence in Trump's handling of the crisis was also "colored sharply by partisanship," with 11 percent of Democrats and 36 percent of independents trusting Trump to react responsibly,

compared to more than three-quarters of Republican respondents.

### **North Korea Threatened A Hydrogen Bomb Test In The Pacific—which Is No Stranger To Nuclear Blasts.**

[Quartz](#) (9/22, Mollman) reports that North Korea “warned Sept. 21 it might detonate a hydrogen bomb over the Pacific Ocean in response to threats made by US president Donald Trump as he addressed the United Nations General Assembly on Sept. 19.” According to the article, “if North Korea did decide—and manage—to detonate its own hydrogen bomb in the Pacific, it would...put at risk people on ships or even land, depending on the location, not to mention create long-lasting environmental damage.”

### **Palau Signs UN Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons.**

[Radio New Zealand](#) (9/22) reports that “Palau’s president Tommy Remengesau has signed the UN treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons.” UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres “described the treaty as a product of increasing concern over the risk posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons, including the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences of their use.” Remengesau also “condemned North Korea’s threats against Guam describing them as intimidation of the entire Pacific region.”

### **Armenia Establishes Diplomatic Ties With Palau And Micronesia.**

The [Armen Press \(ARM\)](#) (9/22) reports that “on the sidelines of the session of the UN General Assembly, foreign minister of Armenia Edward Nalbandian and Palau’s minister of state Faustina Rehuher-Marugg on September 21 signed the protocol on establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries with the presence of President of Palau Tommy Remengesau, press service of the Armenian ministry told Armenpress.” After the signing ceremony, they “held a meeting discussing issues relating to the cooperation within the frames of international organizations.” The article notes that “on the same day, the Armenian FM and Secretary of foreign affairs of Micronesia Lorin Robert signed the protocol on establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries.”

## **US Geological Survey**

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### **USGS Says Cannot Confirm If North Korea Quake Natural Or Manmade.**

[Reuters](#) (9/23, Feast) reports that the U.S. Geological Survey “said on Saturday it could not conclusively confirm whether a magnitude 3.5 earthquake detected in North Korea was manmade or natural.” USGS placed “the epicenter of the quake 22 km (14 miles) east-northeast of Sungjibaegam, North Korea, near the country’s main nuclear test site.” The article notes that “Chinese earthquake officials earlier said the tremor was a “suspected explosion”, while South Korean officials and CTBTO, the nuclear proliferation watchdog, both said they believed it was a natural quake.”

### **Katharine Hayhoe Talks Climate Science.**

The [Fulton \(MO\) Sun](#) (9/24, Wilbers) reports that Katharine Hayhoe, the director of the Climate Science Center at Texas Tech University, and member of the Department of Interior’s South-Central Climate Science Center, gave a talk Wednesday at Westminster College’s Hancock Symposium. Hayhoe discussed climate science and focused “three common myths she thinks, contribute” to an “ideological divide” on the issue.

## **Top National News**

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### **Trump Ignites Backlash With Tweets On Sports.**

President Trump posted several tweets about sports on Saturday, prompting widespread criticism from athletes and business leaders that media analyses said distracted from other important political issues. Reporting was almost uniformly negative toward the President, with even conservative outlets and generally nonpartisan sports icons questioning his decision to rescind the NBA Championship invitation to the Golden State Warriors to visit the White House and his call for the NFL to fire players who protest the National Anthem.

In a front-page article, the [Washington Post](#) (9/23, A1, Kilgore, Phillip) reports the President

"turned professional sports into a political battleground Friday night into Saturday, directing full-throated ire toward African American athletes who have spoken out against him and prompting a sharp rebuttal from the National Football League and several prominent sports figures." The Post says that "in a span of roughly 12 hours, as the sports world would typically be gearing up for college football and baseball's pennant races, Trump ensnared and agitated the most powerful sports league in North America and angered NBA superstars Stephen Curry and LeBron James. His comments set the stage for potential mass protest Sunday along NFL sidelines."

[Reuters](#) (9/23, Goldberg, Schectman) reports Trump at an Alabama rally for Sen. Luther Strange began by calling on NFL owners to fire players who protest the flag and then in [two tweets](#) on Saturday said, "If a player wants the privilege of making millions of dollars in the NFL, or other leagues, he or she should not be allowed to disrespect our Great American Flag (or Country) and should stand for the National Anthem. If not, YOU'RE FIRED. Find something else to do!"

In addition, [USA Today](#) (9/23, Amick) reports that "less than a day after so many prominent members of the Warriors reiterated their stance that they didn't want to visit to White House to celebrate their title, and just hours after Trump's inciteful rally in Alabama where he took aim at NFL players who protest the national anthem, he wasted no time in taking to Twitter – again." Trump [said](#), "Going to the White House is considered a great honor for a championship team. Stephen Curry is hesitating, therefore invitation is withdrawn!"

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/23, Radnofsky, Beaton) characterizes the President's action as unusual and the [Daily Caller](#) (9/23, Pfeiffer) laments that "instead of the focus being on Republican struggles to pass health care and tax reform or the growing threat of a nuclear North Korea, Trump is now facing off in a battle against black athletes, which liberal journalists are already framing as racist." [Bloomberg News](#) (9/22, Jacobs) emphasizes that the President's "criticisms, directed primarily at black athletes, came after Trump fanned racial flames in August by repeatedly equating the actions of both sides after the death of a woman who was protesting against a demonstration by neo-Nazis, white supremacists and Confederate heritage groups in Charlottesville, Virginia."

The [New York Times](#) (9/23, A1, Belson, Davis) reports on its front page that although "many fans on social media were supportive of the president, the reaction from many athletes was immediate and impassioned, particularly among African-American football and basketball players who have criticized Mr. Trump on race."

On the [CBS Weekend News](#) (9/23, story 4, 2:20, Ninan), Tony Dokoupil said "the President's comments stirred fury online" while [Politico](#) (9/22, Griffiths, Jackson) reports Trump's tweets "drew an unusually blunt rebuke from National Football League commissioner Roger Goodell, who said the 'divisive comments' show a 'lack of respect' for the nation's most popular sport."

[USA Today](#) (9/23, Sports) reports Goodell in a statement added, "The NFL and our players are at our best when we help create a sense of unity in our country and our culture. There is no better example than the amazing response from our clubs and players to the terrible natural disasters we've experienced over the last month." The [AP](#) (9/23, Lucey) reports DeMaurice Smith, the executive director of the NFL Players Association, also "angrily denounced" Trump, tweeting: "We will never back down. We no longer can afford to stick to sports." Smith added the player's union is committed to "protecting the constitutional rights of our players as citizens as well as their safety as men who compete in a game that exposes them to great risks."

[USA Today](#) (9/23, Sports) reports NFL Players Association President Eric Winston tweeted, "I am extremely disappointed in the statements made by the President last night." Winston added, "The comments were a slap in the face to the civil rights heroes of the past and present, soldiers who have spilled blood in countless wars to uphold the values of this great nation and American people of all races, ethnicities, genders and sexual orientations who seek civil progress as a means to make this country, and this world, a better place."

[The Hill](#) (9/23, Seipel) reports Trump "fired back" late Saturday, [tweeting](#), "Roger Goodell of NFL just put out a statement trying to justify the total disrespect certain players show to our country. Tell them to stand!"

Meanwhile, the [New York Times](#) (9/23, Hoffman) says Trump's remarks drew an "intense reaction from athletes," who "have begun firing back" at the President. According to the Times, "the response from players was swift," while the [AP](#) (9/23, Lucey, Reynolds) similarly reports that the President's remarks "drew sharp responses from some of the nation's top athletes," and [The Hill](#) (9/23, Manchester) states that he "caught flak on Saturday after ratcheting up his barbs on NFL and NBA players, prompting criticism from various professional athletes."

The [Washington Times](#) (9/23, Blake) reports that after Trump "singled out" Curry, the

Golden State Warriors' "star athlete," the team on Saturday in a statement said, "While we intended to meet as a team at the first opportunity we had this morning to collaboratively discuss a potential visit to the White House, we accept that President Trump has made it clear that we are not invited." The Warriors added, "We believe there is nothing more American than our citizens having the right to express themselves freely on matters important to them. We're disappointed that we did not have an opportunity during this process to share our views or have open dialogue on issues impacting our communities that we felt would be important to raise." However, the team said it will still visit Washington, DC, but will use the trip "to celebrate equality, diversity and inclusion – the values that we embrace as an organization."

[The Hill](#) (9/23, Greenwood) "Briefing Room" blog reports that NBA Commissioner Adam Silver "said Saturday that he is 'disappointed' that the Golden State Warriors won't be visiting the White House in February, after the team canceled the plans amid a feud with President Trump." In a statement, Silver said, "I was in favor of the team visiting the White House and thought it was a rare opportunity for these players to share their views directly with the President." Silver added, "I am disappointed that that will not happen. More importantly, I am proud of our players for taking an active role in their communities and continuing to speak out on critically important issues." The [Daily Caller](#) (9/23, Hookstead) states that "it'll be interesting to see if this becomes a popular trend for sports teams as long as Trump is in the White House."

[The Hill](#) (9/23, Thomsen) reports in its "Briefing Room" blog that Curry on Saturday "fired back" at the President and "said it was 'surreal' for him to wake up and see that Trump had revoked his invitation." Curry asserted, "I don't know why he feels the need to target certain individuals rather than others." He added, "I have an idea of why, but, it's just kind of beneath, I think, a leader of a country to go that route. It's not what leaders do." [The Hill](#) (9/23, Manchester) "Briefing Room" blog notes Curry "told reporters on Friday that he did not want to visit the White House." Curry said, "by not going, hopefully it will inspire some change for what we tolerate in this country and what we stand for, what is accepted and what we turn a blind eye toward."

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (9/23, Ting) reports Curry's teammate Draymond Green became "the first Warriors player to weigh in on...Trump's decision to disinvite the reigning champs to the White House," tweeting that he is "still wondering how this guy is running our country," while [Breitbart](#) (9/23, Huston) reports "NBA star LeBron James" joined in "to slam the president, saying, 'U bum @StephenCurry30 already said he ain't going! So therefore ain't no invite. Going to White House was a great honor until you showed up!'" Nonetheless, Breitbart highlights that "James' claim does not stand on a firm historical footing," as "players have been refusing White House visits for many decades before Donald Trump's first year in office."

[USA Today](#) (9/23, Neuharth-Keusch) reports "this isn't the first time that James, one of the world's most influential athletes, has spoken out against Trump, his most recent comments coming in the wake of the violent rallies in Charlottesville, Va. last month." [The Hill](#) (9/23, Thomsen) "Briefing Room" blog reports that later on Saturday, "the Cleveland Cavaliers star said in a video...that he was 'frustrated' because 'this guy that we've put in charge has tried to divide us once again.'" James asserted, "We all know what happened at Charlottesville and the divide that caused and now it's even hitting more home for me now because he's now using sports as the platform to try and divide us."

A number of other basketball icons also criticized Trump. In its "Briefing Room" blog, [The Hill](#) (9/23, Carter) reports Houston Rockets point guard Chris Paul, the president of the NBA Players Association, "said Saturday President Trump isn't 'man enough' to call athletes a 'son of a b----' to their faces after Trump used the term to describe athletes who kneel during the national anthem." [The Hill](#) (9/23, Carter) "Briefing Room" blog reports that former Los Angeles Lakers player Kobe Bryant tweeted, "A #POTUS who's name alone creates division and anger. Who's words inspire dissension and hatred can't possibly 'Make America Great Again.'"

In addition, [ESPN](#) (9/23) highlights how numerous "former and present NFL players, and front-office executives, reacted on social media," which included [Seattle Seahawks star Richard Sherman](#), [Washington Redskins linebacker Zach Brown](#), [Buffalo Bills running back LeSean McCoy](#), [Tampa Bay Buccaneers wide receiver Desean Jackson](#), [Lions tight end Eric Ebron](#), and [former Heisman Trophy winner Reggie Bush](#), according to The Hill, which also shared criticism from [the co-owners of the New York Giants](#), [the CEO of the San Francisco 49ers](#), [the CEO of the Green Bay Packers](#), [the owner of the Miami Dolphins](#), and [the owners of the Philadelphia Eagles](#), [Buffalo Bills](#), [Indianapolis Colts](#), and [Seattle Seahawks](#).

[USA Today](#) (9/23, Martinelli) reports the mother of former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick, Teresa Kaepernick, also "responded to Trump's remarks about her son with some sass." [The Hill](#) (9/23, Greenwood) reports in its "Briefing Room" blog she said in an

interview with [Deadspin](#) that "it was 'disappointing' that Trump took aim at the NFL during a fiery campaign rally in Alabama Friday night, and accused him of playing to 'racist people' in the crowd of supporters." She additionally compared Trump's behavior to being "like a bully on a playground."

Meanwhile, [USA Today](#) (9/23, Jones) reports Trump's "could end up amplifying the number of demonstrations," which extended to baseball, [The Hill](#) (9/23, Thomsen) "Briefing Room" blog reports, as the Oakland Athletics on Saturday "tweeted a statement in support of players who kneel during the national anthem moments after" catcher and rookie Bruce Maxwell "became the first major league baseball player to kneel during the national anthem Saturday night, one day after President Trump attacked NFL players who did the same." New York Yankees pitcher CC Sabathia told the [New York Daily News](#) (9/23, Mazzeo) that "if the Yankees wind up winning the championship this season," he would not visit the White House. He added, "I just don't believe in anything that is Trump. So there wouldn't be any reason for me to go at all."

[The Hill](#) (9/23, Delk) reports the NAACP additionally "spoke out in defense of NBA All-Star Stephen Curry," tweeting, "A hero dissed by a .... fill in the blank #TakeAKnee."

According to [The Hill](#) (9/23, Lorenz), Milo Yiannopoulos also "disagree[d] with Trump's statement that athletes who kneel during the national anthem should be fired." In an interview, Yiannopoulos said, "I don't think that people should be punished for kneeling during the national anthem. I think what should happen to them is they should be laughed at as attention seekers. ... I don't think they deserve to be fired."

#### ***UNC Men's Basketball Championship Team Skipping White House Visit Due To Scheduling Conflict.***

The [AP](#) (9/23) reports a spokesman for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill men's basketball team, which won the national NCAA championship in April, announced Saturday that it "will not visit the White House because of a scheduling conflict." The spokesman "said...that Hall of Fame coach Roy Williams and the players were willing to go, and the university and White House tried 'eight or nine' dates but none worked."

***Sports Columnists, Pundits Savage Trump Over Remarks.*** [New York Times](#) (9/23, Powell) sports columnist Michael Powell lauds the athletes who are responding to Trump and says that "in the surest and most striking sign of tectonic movements, N.F.L. Commissioner Roger Goodell, as careful and conservative a leader as you'll find in pro sports, felt compelled to call out the president on Saturday."

[Washington Post](#) (9/23, Jenkins) sports columnist Sally Jenkins argues that while the NFL's response to the President's "spit-foaming is hardly a test case for whether the republic will stand," the league "is a maker of manners in this country, so it means something that Commissioner Roger Goodell and others are getting it right, striking the perfect calm but resistant tone in response to Trump's gutter-mouthing, a tone that says, 'We're not your personal WrestleMania, and don't use us for your sham body slams.'" She adds that the NFL, when "faced with whether to play to the basest instincts of the audience, declined. It adhered to civility." Jenkins concludes that when "confronted with Trump's vulgarity, rather than take him head on, [the NFL] chose simply to outclass him."

[The Hill](#) (9/23, Carter) reports ESPN anchor Jemele Hill, who "called Trump a 'white supremacist' and a 'bigot' in a series of tweets earlier this month" that prompted the White House to call for her dismissal, predicted the President's comments "will only incite more player protests, not quell them."

In his [Sports Illustrated](#) (9/23, King) column, Peter King says "on the same day the media was filled with stories about a 27-year-old former NFL player who committed suicide and was found to have severe degenerative brain damage – likely much or all of it from football – the president decried how big hits have been taken out of the game." While he admits that on the issue of tougher hits and opposing anthem protests, "the president might have the support of his core voters," King contends "Trump's longing-for-the-day-of-yore rhetoric in a speech in Alabama Friday night is the kind of anti-football, anti-player divisiveness that, frankly, no player or owner should stand for." He adds that "Trump, apparently, is the only person in America who wants to see a more dangerous game of football."

[USA Today](#) (9/23, Bell) NFL columnist Jarrett Bell hails Trump's remarks as "fresh fuel for NFL players to engage in Colin Kaepernick-styled national anthem protests." Bell asserts that "when the President of the United States, in all of his ignorance, urges his base of supporters to walk out on your game, your livelihood, your principles – because a number of NFL players have exercised their right to express discontent with some major inequalities of the American way – it is way past time to provide a determined response." Bell adds "the rapid reactions from NFL commissioner Roger Goodell and NFL Players Association executive director DeMaurice Smith – who rarely agree on anything – was an encouraging sign of leadership that supplemented the

voices from the players."

[USA Today](#) (9/23) sports columnist Christine Brennan contends that "by unleashing his own despicable brand of fire and fury against the National Football League and the First Amendment rights of its players Friday night, President Donald Trump exhibited his failure to grasp the lesson every schoolyard bully learned long ago: Don't pick on the football players." Brennan adds it was noteworthy "that Trump mustered more anger Friday over Kaepernick's personal decision to not stand for the anthem than he did for the neo-Nazis and white Supremacists who marched in Charlottesville's deadly protest last month."

**WPost: MLB Needs To Raise Netting To Protect Bystanders From Foul Balls.** The [Washington Post](#) (9/23) editorializes another young girl was injured Wednesday at Yankee Stadium when she was hit by "a 105-mph foul ball," which illustrates why Major League Baseball has to take action to prevent more injuries from taking place. The Post asserts "player after player has since insisted that stadiums need more netting to protect fans from incoming foul balls" and argues "a large number of injuries would nevertheless be prevented if major league ballparks installed more extensive netting." The Post concludes that "MLB should look to stadiums in Japan, where netting often reaches from foul pole to foul pole. And the next time the organization issues an obvious safety finding, it should come in the form of a requirement, not a mere recommendation."

### **Trump, Kim Ratchet Up Public Criticism.**

President Trump on Friday responded to the first public criticism directly from North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. Media coverage, which included nearly four and a half minutes on the network newscasts, cast both of their remarks as a dangerous escalation in rhetoric. Reporting also highlighted that North Korea says that it is currently preparing to conduct a hydrogen bomb test over the Pacific Ocean, which analyses warn would further inflame the tense region.

[CNN's Situation Room](#) (9/22, 6:05 p.m. EDT, Acosta) reported that a few hours after Kim described Trump as a "rogue," "gangster," "frightened dog," and "a 'dotard,' which essentially means an old, senile lunatic," the President [tweeted](#), "Kim Jong Un of North Korea, who is obviously a madman who doesn't mind starving or killing his people, will be tested like never before!" The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Gearan, Phillip) reports "the back-and-forth between the United States and North Korea is the latest in a series of events escalating tensions between the two nations."

In a separate article, the [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Nakamura, Gearan) reports the comments came a day after Trump signed new sanctions that "seek to leverage the dominance of the U.S. financial system by forcing nations, foreign companies and individuals to choose whether to do business with the United States or the comparatively tiny economy of North Korea. U.S. officials acknowledged that like other sanctions, these may not deter North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's drive to threaten the United States with a nuclear weapon, but are aimed at slowing him down." Treasury Secretary Mnuchin asserted Trump's executive order "significantly expands Treasury's authority to target those who enable this regime...wherever they are located."

[Reuters](#) (9/22, Heavey) reports that in an Thursday interview with [CNBC](#) that aired Friday, Commerce Secretary Ross said China's steps to restrict trade with North Korea "would "be very" good if they succeed in cutting off imported goods, and showed lessening support from China toward Pyongyang." Ross added, "Even more importantly, it sent a very powerful message to North Korea that China is not being as supportive of them as it had been."

Although "North Korea has long cultivated an image of defiant belligerence, punctuating its propaganda and diplomacy with colorful threats, insults and bluster," a front-page [New York Times](#) (9/22, A1, Sang-Hun) article cautions Kim's personal statement "pushed his government's brinkmanship to a new, potentially more perilous level." According to the Times, "in a country where the leader is essentially portrayed as a god, Mr. Kim's decision to respond personally to Mr. Trump's speech to the United Nations General Assembly and pledge reprisals escalated the standoff over the North's nuclear program in a way that neither he nor his predecessors had done before."

Brian Todd of [CNN's Situation Room](#) (9/22, 5:22 p.m. EDT, Acosta) asserted, "Never before have we seen this North Korean leader put his own name on a statement like this, and go after leader in such a personal and public way." Todd added that US and South Korean officials are now "dissecting his words," as well as "a threat by the foreign minister about testing a hydrogen bomb." He also warned that US officials and analysts "believe the last nuclear bomb North Korea tested this month could have been a hydrogen bomb, which would be a game changer. Why? Because the blast may have been nearly 10 times more powerful than the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, which killed an estimated 150,000 people."

**Bloomberg News** (9/21, Kang, Kim) reports Trump "expanded on those comments at a political rally in Alabama Friday night, saying Kim may be 'smart, he may be strategic' or he may be 'totally crazy,' but no matter what, Americans will be protected." In his speech, which was broadcast by [Fox News Tucker Carlson Tonight](#) (9/22, 8:12 p.m. EDT, Carlson), the President stressed his commitment to "always defend[ing] America's interest above all else," and lamented, "When you look around the world, you have so many where they don't respect their people. but we want nations that cooperate together to work for all people. That's what we care about, all people. We can't have mad men out there shooting rockets all over the place." Trump added, "And, by the way, Rocket Man should have been handled a long time ago." He pledged to "handle it, because we have to handle it. Little Rocket Man. We are going to do it. Because we really have no choice [since Kim is] talking about a massive weapon exploding over the ocean. The Pacific Ocean. Which causes tremendous, tremendous calamity."

On [CNN's Situation Room](#) (9/22, 5:41 p.m. EDT, Acosta), senior political analyst Mark Preston said that "the unpredictability of the North Korean leader is, I think, the biggest wildcard and what concerns me the most, and probably concerns our intelligence officials the most as well. I do think, though, from a United States standpoint, trading barbs back and forth with the leader of North Korea is very ineffective. I think silence is deafening in many ways." He called for tougher sanctions and "really pressuring China behind the scenes to take a more leadership role in this." Senior congressional correspondent Manu Raju said US lawmakers are concerned that with his rhetoric, "the President painted himself in a corner here, and has given Kim Jong-un an excuse to move forward in a way that he may not have had otherwise."

Meanwhile, Sen. Ed Markey said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (9/22, 5:17 p.m. EDT, Acosta), "I think that we should be concerned that this escalatory rhetoric between two leaders of countries that have nuclear weapons is slipping very quickly into something that could become dangerous for the planet. And, again, if he detonates a hydrogen bomb into the atmosphere – that's why we had the atmospheric nuclear test ban in 1963." On whether the US should consider a military option, Markey stated, "No. There is no military option. None. If we take a strike at North Korea, it could very quickly escalate into the deaths of hundreds of thousands or millions of people in South Korea and in other countries in that region. The only answer is to go to final sanctions on the North Koreans."

On [CNN's Situation Room](#) (9/22, 6:13 p.m. EDT, Acosta), Rep. Ruben Gallego said, "The problem is this is bluster, but it could easily get into what we call miscalculation, where one side decides they have to take some type of preemptive action to either protect themselves or get some kind of advantage. But the President did some correct things. He finally entered into a sanctions regime" that "can be helpful in compelling North Korea to the floor. Now he has to follow it through with our allies and make sure they're enforced."

[CNN's Situation Room](#) (9/22, 5:52 p.m. EDT, Acosta) previewed "Trump and Twitter," a special report about the President's tweeting more generally. Former CIA Director Gen. Michael Hayden told chief innovation correspondent Bill Weir, "If I'm the head of a hostile or even friendly intelligence service, I got a new office over here – follow that account. Tell me what this man is saying. It's tremendously revealing. we know the President's hot buttons. We know his vulnerabilities. We know what upsets him. We know what he demands from his subordinates. We even know his sleep patterns based upon his Twitter usage. That's a tremendous gift to a foreign power."

**North Korea Says Hydrogen Bomb Test In Preparation.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, Cheng) reports North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho said Friday that North Korea "might consider a historic aboveground test of a hydrogen bomb over the Pacific Ocean" in retaliation for Trump's remarks at the UN General Assembly this week. Kristen Welker, the White House correspondent for [NBC Nightly News](#) (9/22, story 5, 2:00, Holt), asserted the "threat to test a hydrogen bomb over the Pacific" – rather than the "series of potentially dangerous verbal volleys" between Trump and Kim – is "raising alarm bells." She added, "If North Korea launched a bomb, Pentagon officials say, under one scenario, advanced radars and satellites all over the world would detect the launch, giving the US the military options to intercept it or shoot it down before any radioactive material could do harm. But there are no guarantees."

[CNN's Situation Room](#) (9/22, 6:08 p.m. EDT, Acosta) Pentagon correspondent Barbara Starr said that "North Korea already is getting ready for its next missile launch, according to Administration officials, possibly a missile that could hit the US. Kim Jong-un now threatening the 'highest level of hard-line countermeasure in history' following President Trump's speech at the UN." Meanwhile, Starr said such a test "could change everything," and that the US intelligence community is now watching "for very particular signs" of such a weapon. Yet North Korea is

seemingly undeterred, Starr added, and "all indications are to continue to proceed with their weapons program." A senior Administration official told [Reuters](#) (9/22, Spetalnick) that a hydrogen bomb test would be a "game-changer," but while the official did not give "too much credence" to the threat because "there's a certain amount of bluster that's taken for granted when you're dealing with North Korea," the US "to some extent [does] take it seriously."

Meanwhile, [Reuters](#) (9/22, Heavey) reports Trump and South Korean President Moon Jae-in "agreed to strengthen their defense posture amid rising tensions with North Korea, the White House said on Friday." In a statement, the White House said "Trump and Moon, who met on Thursday, committed to strengthen their 'combined defense posture, including through South Korea's acquisition and development of highly advanced military assets' and 'agreed to the enhanced deployment of U.S. strategic assets in and around South Korea on a rotational basis.'"

In a front-page article, the [New York Times](#) (9/22, A1, Baker, Sanger) examines some of the "pre-emption options" presented by aides to Trump, which "included cyberattacks against military or dual-use facilities, according to senior officials." The Times adds Defense Secretary Mattis "noted that the United States had not attempted to destroy the unarmed missiles that have been tested so far, because they were not on track to hit American territory, or allies like Japan." According to the Times, "so far, the president has declined to explicitly lay out a red line that, if crossed, would provoke some sort of action." A senior official "said that acting to prevent an atmospheric test, which would risk radiation spreading in the winds toward populated areas, could well result in a very different decision." However, the Times admits "such an operation would be highly risky even if it would be far more surgical than Mr. Trump's threat this week to 'totally destroy North Korea' if forced to defend the United States or its allies."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/22, story 5, 2:25, Muir) broadcast Secretary of State Tillerson, who in an interview with David Muir on "Good Morning America" was asked how the US would respond if North Korea detonated a hydrogen bomb. Said Tillerson, "Well, we will continue our efforts in the diplomatic arena, but all of our military options, as the President has said, are on the table." Tillerson added that "once we can assess the nature of this threat, the President will make a decision regarding the appropriate actions," broadcast [CNN's Situation Room](#) (9/22, 5:07 p.m. EDT, Acosta), which said that, "despite the apocalyptic rhetoric" between Trump and Kim, Tillerson insisted that "the US has not given up on finding a diplomatic solution." [Reuters](#) (9/22, Chiacu) reports Tillerson asserted, "We are quite challenged but our diplomatic efforts continue unabated. ... We have put in place the strongest economic sanctions ever to have been assembled against...Kim Jong Un." Tillerson added, "he is being tested with the sanctions, voices from every corner of the world."

The [AP](#) (9/22, Burns, Pennington) reports Susan Thornton, the acting secretary of state for East Asia and the Pacific, "said Friday a North Korean H-bomb test in the Pacific would be 'outrageous.'" Thornton added that such action "would draw a 'concerted and determined international response' but declined to be specific."

According to the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, Cheng), the threat also prompted criticism from both Russia and China, which called on North Korea and the US to deescalate the situation. [Reuters](#) (9/22, Nichols) reports that at a news conference on Friday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said "the exchange of threats is quite bad, unacceptable" He added, "We have to calm down the hot heads." In a separate article, [Reuters](#) (9/22, Nichols, Brunnstrom) reports Lavrov also "again pushed a proposal by Moscow and Beijing for a dual suspension of North Korean weapons tests and the U.S.-South Korean military drills to kick-start talks."

In addition, although "China has tightened the financial screws on North Korea under U.N. sanctions approved in recent weeks," the [Washington Post](#) (9/22, A1, Gearan, Denyer) in a front-page article reports China on Friday "disputed Trump's claim that it has joined a new round of punishing economic sanctions against its communist ally." While Trump said Thursday that Chinese President Xi Jinping "had ordered Chinese banks to cease conducting business with North Korean entities," Lu Kang, a spokesman with China's Foreign Ministry, "denied that Beijing had agreed to go that far." The Post adds that Lu instead "appealed for calm" and insisted, "What's needed now is to implement the U.N. resolutions strictly and positively explore channels to solve problems via talks, rather than provoking each other and adding oil to the fire."

**US-Japanese Navies Conduct Drills Off Korean Peninsula.** [Reuters](#) (9/22, Kelly, Kubo) reports "the U.S. Navy carrier Ronald Reagan is conducting drills with Japanese warships in seas south of the Korean peninsula, Japan's military said on Friday, in a show of naval power as Pyongyang threatens further nuclear and missile tests." Reuters adds that "the Reagan strike group will conduct a separate drill with the South Korean Navy in October, the defense ministry said in a statement distributed to South Korean lawmakers on Monday."

**White House AidesAppealed To Trump To Tone Down UN Rhetoric.** The [Los Angeles Times](#)

(9/22, Bennett) reports "senior aides to President Trump repeatedly warned him not to deliver a personal attack on North Korea's leader at the United Nations this week, saying insulting the young despot in such a prominent venue could irreparably escalate tensions and shut off any chance for negotiations to defuse the nuclear crisis." According to the Times, "some of Trump's top aides, including national security advisor H.R. McMaster, had argued for months against making the attacks on North Korea's leader personal, warning it could backfire." The Times says "some advisors now worry that the escalating war of words has pushed the impasse with North Korea into a new and dangerous phase that threatens to derail the months-long effort to squeeze Pyongyang's economy through sanctions to force Kim to the negotiating table."

**Army Investigating Fake South Korean Evacuation Order.** The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Lamothe) reports counterintelligence officials from the US Army in South Korea "are investigating fake mobile alerts and social media messages warning American military families and Defense Department personnel of orders to evacuate the volatile peninsula on Thursday." The officials in a Facebook post stated that US Forces Korea "did NOT send this message" and they "warned that Americans living in South Korea with U.S. troops and Defense Department employees should confirm that any evacuation-related communications are legitimate before acting."

**South Korean Preppers Revise Emergency Plans As Tensions Rise.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, Lee) reports that while most South Koreans do their best to ignore the belligerence and threats from North Korea, preppers in the country are revising their disaster plans as tensions escalate.

**WSJournal Reflects On Life In North Korea.** In a more than 2,100-word article, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, Lyons, Cheng) reflects on a recent visit to North Korea and shares what its reporters saw on their closely monitored trip to Pyongyang earlier this week.

**US Government Bonds Strengthen On North Korea Tensions.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, Banerji) reports US government bonds strengthened Friday as the yield on the benchmark 10-year US Treasury note declined from 2.278 percent on Thursday to 2.262 percent. The Journal attributes this change to market concerns over North Korea's threat to test a hydrogen bomb over the Pacific Ocean.

**WPost, WSJournal: Trump Should Allow Sanctions To Work, Stay Out Of Gutter.** The [Washington Post](#) (9/22) editorializes that President Trump "appears to have embarked on a two-track approach to pressuring North Korea into restraining its nuclear weapons and missile programs" by focusing on "ever-tightening economic sanctions that, if properly implemented, could further isolate North Korea from world finance and trade" in addition to "a game of chicken to see who can hurl the harshest and most absurd rhetorical insults." The Post asserts that while Kim Jong Un's regime may avoid the penalties, "sanctions and coercive diplomacy, however difficult, offer the best available approach, given the unappealing alternatives." However, the Post criticizes Trump for escalating "the food fight" with Kim and asserts the President "ought to focus on making his sanctions work and quit imitating the supposed madman he is trying to pressure."

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22) hails the latest sanctions on North Korea and argues Kim Jong Un's threat to test a hydrogen bomb over the Pacific Ocean proves his regime is rattled. The Journal calls on China to live up to its commitments to avoid war, which the editorial acknowledges needs to be a last resort to prevent North Korea's nuclear program from advancing further.

### **Puerto Rico Issues Evacuation Order For 70,000 People With Dam In Danger Of Failing.**

In [ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/22, lead story, 3:00, Muir) lead broadcast, Rob Marciano reported Puerto Rican officials on Friday instituted a flash flood emergency in response to Hurricane Maria, which cracked the Guajataca Dam, "forcing 70,000 people to evacuate immediately." In a front-page article, the [Washington Post](#) (9/22, A1, Schmidt, Zezima, Somashekhar, Cassady) reports Puerto Rico Gov. Ricardo Rosselló said the dam had suffered a "fissure" and called on residents in municipalities of Quebradillas, Isabela, and part of San Sebastian to evacuate. While the status of the dam was unclear Friday evening, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, Kamp) reports the National Weather Service has warned of its imminent failure and called on Puerto Ricans to move to higher ground.

According to the [New York Times](#) (9/22, Times), "the news about the dam was a dramatic sign that the scale of troubles left behind by the storm were just being understood." On [NBC Nightly News](#) (9/22, story 2, 2:25, Holt), Gabe Gutierrez reported that elsewhere "the floodwaters are receding, but many communities are still inundated." In Toa Baja, 30 miles west of San Juan, Gutierrez said, "The town's mayor tells us at least eight people drowned here and authorities have rescued 4,000 to 5,000 trapped by floodwaters. Without working cellphones, he's

coordinating with rescue crews from Florida and Virginia by word of mouth."

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, A1, Robles, Alvarez, Walsh) reports in a front-page article that "with everyone from the governor of Puerto Rico to the mayor of San Juan predicting that it could take four to six months to resume electrical service, people [are] contemplating empty refrigerators, campfire cooking, bathing in their own sweat and perhaps wrangling for fresh water on an island accustomed to hard times but nothing like what the future may bring." According to the Times, "the biggest long-term obstacle was the prospect of months without power."

In the lead [CBS Evening News](#) (9/22, lead story, 2:20, Mason) segment, David Begnaud also reported residents are "trying to cope without power. Outdated and fragile, most of Puerto Rico's power lines are above ground, no match for Maria." Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority CEO Ricardo Ramos predicted that the island could be without power for months. He added, "If we go back to history under Hurricane Hugo, it took six months to restore power to everyone." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, De Córdoba, Campo-Flores) reports Rosselló said, "It has been difficult to see the deterioration of infrastructure in Puerto Rico. ... But it has been even more difficult finding citizens who have lost everything."

[NBC Nightly News](#) (9/22, story 3, 1:20, Holt) Gadi Schwartz reported that for the first responders, Maria has been "yet another disaster in what seems like an unrelenting season of catastrophe." Schwartz added, "So many organizations have been stretched thin. FEMA supporting more than 30,000 people in disaster zones. The Red Cross deploying more than 5,000 workers and nearly its entire vehicle fleet. Samaritan's Purse, a North Carolina nonprofit, responding to their third hurricane in the last few weeks with 50,000 pounds of emergency supplies to Puerto Rico."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, O'Keefe) reports that in the days ahead, Puerto Rico "is set to ask for several billion dollars in federal relief after two major hurricanes, as officials acknowledge that the months-long recovery may compel more residents to abandon an already economically distressed island." Sen. Marco Rubio said, "We have to begin to think in the worst possible terms, between power restoration, critical infrastructure, housing assistance, the need to airlift critical medical patients out of the island to the mainland, seniors, things like that." Rep. Darren Soto (D), "the first Floridian of Puerto Rican descent to serve in Congress," said Thursday, "We've anticipated we'll see tens of thousands of folks here at least temporarily," he said. "Many were, I'm sure, already contemplating the move, but this will push them over the top."

**Knicks Player Donates, Raises Money For Puerto Rico.** [USA Today](#) (9/22, Tsuji) reports New York Knicks forward Carmelo Anthony has "set up a donation page and has contributed \$50,000" to Puerto Rico and is trying to \$1 million. In his statement, Anthony said "his father is Puerto Rican so he has family on the island, and that since the power has been knocked out after Hurricane Maria...he hasn't heard from them. He's also thinking of all the people struggling to recover."

**New York Governor Assembles Delegation To Puerto Rico To Assess Damage From Hurricane Maria.** [CNBC](#) (9/22) reports online that the devastation Hurricane Maria caused on Puerto Rico "is nothing short of catastrophic." Six people are confirmed dead, and the island's infrastructure sustained a "ruinous blow." After the hurricane struck, "New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo immediately assembled a delegation of administration officials and emergency response experts, including 60 members of the National Guard, to do a reconnaissance of the destruction. The relief flight, donated by JetBlue – the largest airline in Puerto Rico – departed from John F. Kennedy International Airport to San Juan Airport early on Friday." President Trump said he will visit the island "to see the damage firsthand and disclosed that his Homeland Security adviser, Tom Bossert, has been helping him actively prepare the government's response to Hurricane Maria."

### **Graham And Cassidy Plan Changes To Bill As More GOP Senators Express Doubts.**

With several senators from both the conservative and centrist wings of the Republican caucus saying over the weekend that they will not support, or have not yet committed to supporting, the Graham-Cassidy healthcare bill, the [Washington Post](#) (9/24, A1, Sullivan, Cunningham, Phillip) reports that Sens. Lindsey Graham and Bill Cassidy "plan to release a revised version of their bill Monday sending more health-care dollars to the states of key holdouts" Sens. Susan Collins and Lisa Murkowski. But while Murkowski has been on the fence, "Republicans close to the process have long counted Collins as an eventual 'no,' with some predicting that little could be done to the bill to change her mind." Sean Sullivan, one of the writers of the Post report, [tweeted](#), "There is pessimism tonight among some Rs close to the process that these changes to Cassidy-Graham will move Collins from likely no to yes."

[Bloomberg News](#) (9/24, Dopp) reports that the revised bill "also changes language

regarding pre-existing conditions. ... States would have to describe how their health plans 'shall maintain access to adequate and affordable health insurance coverage for individuals with pre-existing conditions.' The original language said each state had to show how it 'intends' to have adequate and affordable access to coverage."

[The Hill](#) (9/24, Sullivan) reports that in a Sunday evening statement, Senate Minority Leader Schumer said, "Despite an attempt to appear to add money for a select few states, this bill is just as bad for those states and the rest of the states because it still contains a massive cut to Medicaid, and would throw our health insurance system into chaos while raising premiums. It still takes away protections for those with preexisting conditions and further weakens consumer protections."

[NBC Nightly News](#) (9/24, story 3, 2:30, Snow) reported earlier that passage of the bill is "looking more and more difficult now with two more Republicans today saying [that] they have big problems with this bill." NBC's Kelly O'Donnell reported, "Signs point to outright opposition and wavering reluctance from a few Republicans whose votes are critical." Collins: "Well, it is hard for me to envision getting to yes on this bill because my concerns are so fundamental." Sen. Rand Paul: "This is a bad idea. It's not repeal." The [AP](#) (9/24, Fram) reports that Sen. Ted Cruz "also voiced opposition, underscoring the bill's problems with both ends of the GOP spectrum." At a Texas event, Cruz said, "Right now, they don't have my vote." [USA Today](#) (9/24, Kelly) reports that Cruz also said that he does not think that fellow conservative Sen. Mike Lee is on board yet, either. [ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/24, story 8, 0:25, Llamas) said in a brief update that the legislation is "in critical condition." John Dickerson said on the [CBS Weekend News](#) (9/24, story 3, 2:15, Quijano), "There don't look like there are enough Republicans to support it because of its structural policy flaws."

The [New York Times](#) (9/24, Kaplan) reports that with no Democrats expected to back the bill, GOP leaders can afford to lose only two members of their caucus, and both Paul and Sen. John McCain have announced their opposition – though the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/24, A1, Radnofsky, Mann) says that only McCain said that his vote was totally out of reach. The [Washington Post](#) (9/24, Costa) reports that Paul "continues to engage with President Trump and Senate leaders, giving proponents of the latest GOP bill a glimmer of hope." He "signaled Sunday that he is willing to consider a 'narrow' version of the legislation."

Paul said on [NBC's Meet The Press](#) (9/24, Todd), "I have always been a yes for repeal, but the bill unfortunately keeps most of the Obamacare spending, almost all of it, and just reshelves it and block grants it to the states." Jonathan Swan of [Axios](#) (9/24) writes that Paul wants the legislation to "cut the Affordable Care Act spending way back" and "scrap way more Affordable Care Act regulations. ... Paul's list of demands suggest he's not an absolute no, but his conditions may be impossible to meet." Washington Post congressional reporter Paul Kane [tweeted](#), "Chasing a ghost – if you successfully buy off Murkowski with more \$\$\$, how do you placate Rand, who wants less \$\$\$?"

On [CNN's State Of The Union](#) (9/24, Tapper), Collins declined to confirm a "no" vote, saying she was waiting on an analysis from the Congressional Budget Office. Collins noted that the Affordable Care Act is "flawed" and that she sees "the work we're doing in the health committee as the path forward." Collins also joined CBS Face the Nation to talk about the bill. However, [Politico](#) (9/24, Robillard) reports that she said "it was 'very difficult for me to imagine a scenario' where she votes for Graham-Cassidy."

NBC's Benjy Sarlin [tweeted](#), "We may see some more 'Psh, I totally wasn't going to vote for that' comments if Collins/Murkowski officially kill it. Still kinda alive now."

**Trump: "I Don't Know What They're Doing," But "Eventually We'll Win."** The [Washington Post](#) (9/24, Phillip) reports that President Trump "left open the possibility that the latest Republican effort to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act might not be successful" at this time, and said "that his first priority has always been on overhauling the tax code." [The Hill](#) (9/24, Conradis) reports that Trump told reporters, "I have been watching for seven years at the Republicans that have been saying 'repeal and replace' and then you have John McCain voting 'no' for whatever reason. ... So I don't know what they're doing, but you know what? Eventually we'll win, whether it's now or later."

White House Director of Legislative Affairs Marc Short said on [Fox News Sunday](#) (9/24, Wallace) that the bill "is not dead" and "we're trying to win over the last couple of senators to get there." Short said on [NBC's Meet The Press](#) (9/24, Todd) that special interests were making decisions on healthcare, and that they should "push it to the states" to make decisions. He said that "preexisting conditions are protected by this legislation."

**Graham Says GOP Will "Get The Votes Next Week."** [Politico](#) (9/24, Robillard) reports that

Graham said on ABC's This Week that "the GOP would manage to round up the 50 votes necessary to pass Obamacare repeal through the Senate by the end of the next week, but their path to 50 is unclear." Graham said, "I think we're going to get the votes next week." When asked on [ABC's This Week](#) (9/24, Raddatz) about criticism of the bill from some insurance groups, Graham said, "I would have been surprised if these people were for our bill, because we take money away from them, [and] give to it state governments to design systems that will deliver a better outcome."

**McCain Says His Stance Is Not About Trump.** The [Washington Examiner](#) (9/24, Leonard) reports that McCain "defended his vote against the Republican healthcare bill this summer, saying that his decision was not rooted in antagonism against President Trump for mocking his military record." McCain told [CBS' 60 Minutes](#) (9/24, Stahl), "If I took offense at everybody who has said something about me, or disparaged me or something like that – life is too short. You've gotta move on. And on an issue of this importance to the nation, for me to worry about a personal relationship, then I'm not doing my job."

**Some Democrats Wonder If Party Strategy Failed On Healthcare.** The [Washington Post](#) (9/24, Weigel) reports, "This week, as Senate Republicans scrambled one more time to unravel the Affordable Care Act on a party-line vote, some Democrats asked whether it all could have been prevented with a little more strategy." They wonder if the agreement that Schumer and House Minority Leader Pelosi reached with Trump "on the debt limit that cleared the calendar" gave the GOP time to revisit healthcare, or if Sen. Bernie Sanders' announcement of a Medicare For All bill energized conservatives. One Democratic voter at an Iowa event told the Post, "That should have waited. They should have gotten this bill put down and decided what to do from there."

Sen. Cory Booker said on [MSNBC's Politics Nation](#) (9/24) that "every member of the Democratic caucus knows that right now what we need to be focused on is protecting and defending the Affordable Care Act. And actually working in a bipartisan manner to make it better, which we had going on." Several Democratic senators tweeted about the bill on Sunday. Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto [tweeted](#), "#GrahamCassidy is not about Republicans and Democrats, it's about life and death. Stop playing politics with healthcare." Sen. Kamala Harris [tweeted](#), "Don't stop calling, writing letters, and tweeting, telling Senators to vote NO on #GrahamCassidy. This isn't over until Sept 30th." Sen. Ron Wyden [tweeted](#), "As ranking member on cmte w/jurisdiction over health care, I've seen a lot of health care proposals. #GrahamCassidy is BAD POLICY & cruel."

**Dionne: GOP Rushing Bill In Search Of "A Win."** E.J. Dionne writes in his [Washington Post](#) (9/24) column, "There is only one reason the Senate even considered a vote this week: The GOP base, and particularly the party's donor class, wants repeal. ... Republicans scheduled a quickie, last-minute hearing this week for show. Because Trump and his party want 'a win,' they're willing to wreak havoc on the insurance markets, state governments and people's lives to get it."

### **Trump, Pence Urge GOP To Repeal Obamacare As McCain Opposes Healthcare Bill.**

[Politico](#) (9/22, Nelson) reports President Trump on Friday "warned Republicans...to fall in line behind last-ditch legislation in the Senate to repeal and replace Obamacare, writing online that any GOP lawmaker who votes against the bill will be remembered as 'the Republican who saved Obamacare'" and he "singled out" Sen. Rand Paul. The President [tweeted](#), "Rand Paul, or whoever votes against Hcare Bill, will forever (future political campaigns) be known as 'the Republican who saved ObamaCare.'"

The [Indianapolis Star](#) (9/22, Cook, King, Groppe, Lange) reports Vice President Pence on Friday also "turned his attention to health care" on a visit to Indiana "to drum up support for tax reform," as he "called on Congress to pass the Graham-Cassidy health care bill." Speaking in Anderson, Pence "acknowledged the effort would not be easy" and admitted "some have gone so far as to announce their opposition already," but said he and Trump "remained 'undeterred' and could not 'in good conscience abandon this cause.'" The Vice President added, "A vote against Graham-Cassidy is a vote to save Obamacare. ... The Republican majority in Congress in particular was not elected to save Obamacare, they were elected to repeal and replace it – and it's time for every member of the Republican majority to keep their word to the American people."

Meanwhile, [The Hill](#) (9/22, Greenwood) reports White House counselor Kellyanne Conway said Friday on "Fox & Friends" that the White House is "increasingly optimistic about the chances to pass Graham-Cassidy," which she hailed as "an innovative solution that would still preserve many of the most important components of repealing and replacing ObamaCare, doing away with those draconian taxes and penalties – saving about \$300 billion in taxes, \$485 billion in

spending."

However, the [New York Times](#) (9/22, A1, Kaplan, Pear) in a front-page article reports Sen. John McCain on Friday "announced...he would oppose the latest proposal to repeal the Affordable Care Act, leaving Republican leaders with little hope of succeeding in their last-ditch attempt to dismantle the health law and fulfill their longstanding promise to conservative voters." The Times characterizes McCain's decision as "a slightly less dramatic reprise of his middle-of-the-night thumbs-down that killed the last repeal effort in July." The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, A1, Sullivan, Eilperin) says on its front page that McCain's announcement left "the latest Republican effort to dismantle the Affordable Care Act...on the brink of failure" with Senate Majority Leader McConnell and the President backed "into a difficult corner" because "they must now decide whether to continue to pursue a vote that increasingly appears likely to fail, or short-circuit the endeavor and deal with the backlash after another unsuccessful try."

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/22, story 4, 2:40, Muir) Mary Bruce reported "McCain might have just killed this new repeal, because Republicans can only afford to lose two votes. Rand Paul has already said no. And McCain did this even though his own best friend in the Senate, Lindsey Graham, is one of the architects." In a front-page article, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, A1, Armour, Peterson) reports McCain in his statement said, "I cannot in good conscience vote for the Graham-Cassidy proposal. I believe we could do better working together, Republicans and Democrats, and have not yet really tried," He added, "I take no pleasure in announcing my opposition. Far from it. The bill's authors are my dear friends, and I think the world of them. I know they are acting consistently with their beliefs and sense of what is best for the country. So am I."

In addition, [Politico](#) (9/22, McCaskill) reports Sen. Rand Paul, "a definitive 'no' on Senate Republicans' last-ditch effort to repeal and replace Obamacare," in a series of tweets said Friday that despite the President's remarks, he "won't be bribed or bullied" into voting for the legislation. Paul [asserted](#), "No one is more opposed to Obamacare than I am, and I've voted multiple times for repeal. The current bill isn't repeal." He [added](#), "I won't vote for Obamacare Lite that keeps 90% of the taxes & spending just so some people can claim credit for something that didn't happen" Paul [continued](#), "Calling a bill that KEEPS most of Obamacare 'repeal' doesn't make it true. That's what the swamp does. I won't be bribed or bullied."

On the [CBS Evening News](#) (9/22, story 3, 2:10, Mason), chief congressional correspondent Nancy Cordes said the "GOP repeal effort has been just as rushed as past attempts, leaving" Sen. Cory Gardner and other Republican senators "scrambling to figure out what it would mean for their states before next Saturday's vote deadline." She added that "with McCain and...Paul opposed, GOP leaders can't afford to lose another senator."

In the lead [NBC Nightly News](#) (9/22, lead story, 2:20, Holt) segment, Capitol Hill correspondent Kasie Hunt reported that "in the spotlight: undecided Sen. Lisa Murkowski," which prompted the Vice President to go on Alaska radio "to keep up the pressure." Pence said, "I probably don't need to tell the people of Alaska about the failings of national socialized healthcare." Hunt added Pence also lobbied Sen. Susan Collins, but the [AP](#) (9/22, Villeneuve) reports Collins "said Friday she's 'leaning against' a new Republican proposal to eliminate the Affordable Care Act but is waiting on an analysis by the Congressional Budget Office before making a final decision." When asked about Trump's tweet on Friday, Collins "said she wants to fix serious issues in the health care law." According to the AP, Collins' comments came as Maine Gov. Paul LePage met with Pence in Washington, DC "to promote the legislation. LePage said the bill represents the 'best chance' to reform the current system and to return decision-making on health care funding to the states."

According to the [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Sullivan), "consumer health organization" Community Catalyst Action Fund, which is "trying to defeat the latest Republican attempt to dismantle the Affordable Care Act," on Friday launched a nearly \$200,000 radio advertising campaign focused on pressuring McCain, Murkowski, Collins and fellow Sens. Rob Portman and Shelley Moore Capito to oppose the legislation.

**Trump Criticizes McCain For "Terrible" Opposition To Repeal And Replace.** [The Hill](#) (9/22, Byrnes) reports that in his speech at a campaign rally in Huntsville, Alabama on Friday, Trump "chided" McCain over his "totally unexpected" and "terrible" opposition and insisted that when it comes to repealing and replacing Obamacare, "We're going to do it eventually."

**Schumer Thanks McCain For Opposition, But Warns Democrats Against Celebrating.** [Politico](#) (9/22, Schor, Caygle) reports Senate Majority Leader Schumer in a statement thanked McCain for his "courage" in opposing the healthcare bill and asserted he has "assured Senator McCain that as soon as repeal is off the table, we Democrats are intent on resuming the bipartisan process."

However, Politico says that Schumer "signaled" Democrats not to celebrate and "they reminded each other in public and private on Friday that, McCain's opposition aside, only the Sept. 30 expiration of Republicans' ability to push through repeal with 50 votes can give Obamacare supporters room to breathe easy."

**GOP Sought To Placate Angry Donors With Latest Push For Obamacare Repeal.** The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Hulse) reports "the backlash from big donors as well as the grass roots panicked Senate Republicans and was part of the motivation behind the sudden zeal to take one last crack at repealing the health care law before the end of the month." The Times says that in the face of McCain's new opposition, "Republicans must confront the possibility that they will once again let down their backers with no big win in sight." According to the Times, "Republicans say the fund-raising drop-off has been steep and across the board, from big donations to the small ones the party solicits online from the grass roots." The Times adds that GOP officials "say the hostile views of both large and small donors are in unusual alignment and that the negative sentiment is crystallized in the fund-raising decline."

**American Healthcare Associations "Mobilized" Against GOP Bill.** In an analysis, the [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Ingraham) says that "one factor in the bill's apparent (although not yet certain) demise: Cassidy-Graham has mobilized nearly the entire American health-care community in opposition." The Post provides a list of national advocacy groups that oppose the measure and "strikingly....was unable to identify any medical associations that support the measure." However, while "some antiabortion groups, such as the March for Life and National Right to Life, do support the bill," the Post adds "they are not primarily medical or health-care-oriented in focus."

In his [New York Times](#) (9/22) column, David Leonhardt asserts that because "defenders of the new Trumpcare – the Graham-Cassidy bill – are telling Jimmy Kimmel to be quiet and leave the health policy debate to the experts," he shares the statements from the American Medical Association, American Nurses Association, American Hospital Association, AARP, and other major healthcare organizations criticizing the legislation.

**Polls Highlight Opposition To GOP Healthcare Plan, Support For Single-Payer Healthcare.** The [Hill](#) (9/22, Sullivan) reports a new [poll](#) of 638 "registered voters" (9/20-9/21) "from the left-leaning Public Policy Polling finds that less than a quarter of respondents approve of the Senate GOP's latest repeal and replacement bill, while 50 percent disapprove." In particular, "46 percent of voters said they would be less likely to vote for a member of Congress if he or she voted for Graham-Cassidy, while 23 percent would be more likely," and 77 percent "said they agreed with late-night host Jimmy Kimmel that no one should be denied coverage because they cannot afford it."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Phillips) reports a Washington Post-ABC News poll of 1,002 "adults" (9/18-9/21) "finds that more than half of Americans prefer Obamacare (56 percent) to the latest GOP plan," while 33 percent "prefer the bill that Senate Republicans, panicked by a month back home with their base and no Obamacare repeal to show, abruptly put on the table this month." The Post adds that what is "worse for Republicans: Roughly twice as many people strongly prefer the current law to Republicans' plan, 42 to 22 percent." However, the Post acknowledges "Democrats are unsurprisingly supportive of the current health-care law – in all 85 percent of them prefer it to the Republican plan, with 70 percent strongly preferring it" whereas "Republicans favor the new plan by a nearly 3 to 1 margin, 66 to 23 percent over the current health-care law. But note that nearly a quarter of their party doesn't support this bill, which is the closest thing to an Obamacare repeal that Congress has seriously considered."

According to [The Hill](#) (9/22, Easley), the latest Harvard-Harris Poll survey of 2,177 "registered voters" (9/17-9/20) "found 52 percent favor a single-payer system against 48 who oppose it." The Hill reports "a strong majority of Democrats – 69 percent – back the idea. Republicans oppose single-payer, 65-35, and independents are split, with 51 percent opposing and 49 supporting." The Hill emphasizes that "the best-polling aspect of single-payer is the public's belief that it will cover more people. Sixty-nine percent said it would provide more coverage, including 54 percent of Republicans."

**WSJournal Criticizes McCain, Paul For Healthcare Stance.** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22) laments that Sens. John McCain and Rand Paul are tarnishing their respective legislative records by opposing Republican efforts to repeal Obamacare and reform the country's healthcare system. The Journal worries their actions will backfire on GOP moderates and leave Americans with fewer healthcare options.

**WSJournal: Obamacare Mandate Hurts Low-Income Families.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22) editorializes that IRS data reveals the Obamacare insurance mandate is disproportionately hurting low-income families. The Journal contends that failure to repeal the law and reform the

US healthcare system reinforces this status quo.

### **New Travel Restriction Policy Adds Chad, North Korea, Venezuela To List; Sudan Removed.**

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (9/24, story 10, 0:25, Llamas) reported that President Trump has revealed "his new travel ban. ... The President issu[ed] a new order, imposing travel restrictions on Chad, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Somalia, Syria, Venezuela, and Yemen." The [CBS Weekend News](#) (9/24, story 4, 0:30, Quijano) reported that DHS "says these countries do not share sufficient information with the US or have not taken necessary security precautions."

The [AP](#) (9/24, Colvin) reports that the restrictions "range from full travel bans on nationals from countries like Syria to more targeted restrictions. A suspension of non-immigrant visas to citizens for Venezuela, for instance, applies only to senior government officials and their immediate families." The announcement came on "the same day as Trump's temporary ban on visitors from six Muslim-majority countries is set to expire, 90 days after it went into effect."

[Bloomberg News](#) (9/24, Dopp, Olorunnipa) reports that the President wrote in his proclamation, "I must act to protect the security and interests of the United States and its people."

[USA Today](#) (9/24, Toppo) reports that while Chad, North Korea, and Venezuela have been added to the list, one nation on the original travel ban list – Sudan – has been removed. Administration officials said that Sudan "was cooperating with both monitoring security and sharing information with the US government." Ryan Grim of The Intercept [tweeted](#), "Sudan getting dropped from the travel ban comes as the UAE has been lobbying hard for them in DC in exchange for mercenary support in Yemen." (The [Washington Post](#) (9/24, Barrett) writes that Iraq was removed from the list between the original and second versions of the ban. [The Hill](#) (9/24, Beavers) reports that DHS now advise that "Iraqi nationals should 'be subject to additional scrutiny to determine if they pose risks to the national security or public safety of the United States.'")

The [New York Times](#) (9/24, Shear) reports that officials also "described the new order as a much more targeted effort than the president's earlier one. Each of the countries will be under its own set of travel restrictions, though in most cases citizens of the countries will be unable to emigrate" to the US, "and most will be barred from coming to work, study or vacation in America."

The [New York Times](#) (9/24, Shear) reports that lawyers who filed challenges to the previous travel ban "left open the possibility that they would also challenge the new restrictions." Anthony Romero of the ACLU said, "This is an apparent effort to paper over the original sin of the Muslim ban, especially when just last week Trump said he wanted a 'larger, tougher, more specific' ban." The [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/24, Lauter, King) reports that "immigrant advocacy groups made clear that they would use many of the same arguments against the new restrictions." Frank Sharry of America's Voice said, "This is the Muslim ban by another approach. [Trump is] doing this to circumvent the courts and ban people based on the God they pray to, and that's unconstitutional."

The [Washington Times](#) (9/24, Dinan) reports, "No visas already issued in any of the countries will be revoked, but new visas will face the restrictions. The old travel policy remains in effect for now, with the carve-outs the Supreme Court imposed in June. The new restrictions generally take effect Oct. 18."

Several Democrats commented on Twitter. Rep. Nanette Barragán (D-CA) [tweeted](#), "@realDonaldTrump can pretend all he want, but the new #travelban is the same racist policy as before. #NoMuslimBanEver". Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO) [tweeted](#), "This #travelban, too, will be challenged in the courts." Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA) [tweeted](#), "This new #TravelBan is another discriminatory gimmick by POTUS that does not address our nation's security needs."

[Reuters](#) (9/24, Mason, Stewart), the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/24, Meckler), the [Washington Examiner](#) (9/24, Feldscher), and the [ABC News](#) (9/24) and [NBC News](#) (9/25) websites have similar coverage.

**Experts Say SCOTUS May Now Decide Not To Hear Case Challenging Ban.** [Reuters](#) (9/24, Hurley) writes that the new policy could mean that the Supreme Court will "skip deciding the case altogether," since "the March 6 order under Supreme Court review banned travelers from six Muslim-majority countries and limited refugee admissions." Experts say that "with the travel restrictions expiring, the court has an easy way out because it could simply say that the case is no longer a live issue and therefore, in legal parlance, moot."

**Trump: Border Wall Will Be "See Through."**

[The Hill](#) (9/22, Manchester) reports President Trump "told a crowd of supporters in Alabama on Friday night that his proposed wall along the U.S.-Mexico border would be 'see through.'" Trump asserted, "The wall is happening. In fact, you probably saw, you know, we have a wall up there now, and re-renovating it already. It's being made pristine, perfect, just as good as new, though we may go a little higher than that, but that's OK. And we are building samples of a new wall. You know, it has to be a see-through wall." He added, "If you can't [see] through it, you don't know who's on the other side. Let's say we build a pre-cast concrete wall and now we have people on the other side," he continued. "It's going to stop drugs. It's going to stop a lot of bad things."

### **Trump Focuses On Tax Reform, Promising "Largest Tax Cut" In US History.**

[The Hill](#) (9/22, Greenwood) reports President Trump in his [weekly address](#) renewed his push for tax reform on Friday by previewing "a plan to simplify the tax code and lower corporate tax rates." Trump explained that the Administration is "pursuing tax cuts and reform that create jobs in America, for American workers – not foreign workers, but American workers," adding that "it will be the largest tax cut in our country's history." The Hill adds that a "key focus" of the plan will be the repatriation of "trillions of dollars in wealth held overseas."

*Pence Discusses Tax Reform During Indiana Visit.* The [Indianapolis Star](#) (9/22) reports Vice President Pence on Friday visited Anderson, Indiana to speak about Trump's upcoming tax overhaul plan. The [AP](#) (9/22, Slodysko) calls Pence's visit "the continuation of a campaign by" the Administration "that is alternately attempting to woo and strong-arm [Sen. Joe Donnelly] into supporting whatever the GOP plan ends up being." Donnelly, the AP says, is one of just three "Democratic senators who did not sign a letter addressed to Republican leaders and Trump that said the Democratic caucus would not support a tax overhaul that cuts taxes for the 'top 1 percent' or adds to the government's \$20 trillion debt." In a separate article, the [AP](#) (9/22) notes that Donnelly "has been coy thus far about whether he will support the GOP effort."

The [AP](#) (9/22) reports Pence also announced during his speech that the President will visit Indianapolis next Wednesday to promote his tax reform plan. The [Indianapolis Star](#) (9/22, Groppe, Lange) suggests the state "is getting lots of attention in the Trump administration's effort to win bipartisan support for a tax package because of Sen. Joe Donnelly," who "crosses party lines more than most members of his party, including on some tax issues." If Donnelly does not, the Star adds, "Republicans could use that against him in next year's election."

*Republicans Prepare For Big Tax Week.* The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Debonis, Sullivan, Paletta) reports Republicans are targeting a 20 percent corporate rate in their tax reform plan, which the Post notes is a "substantial cut" from current rates despite falling "short of the 15 percent President Trump has long pushed for." According to other "Republicans familiar with the emerging details," the plan will also include a temporary provision that allows "full expensing," which permits businesses to fully deduct their capital expenses immediately rather than writing off their depreciation over the course of several years." According to Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform, the lower rate and expensing provisions "will kick-start the economy in a way that reelects every Republican who has a vowel in his name." Norquist also believes that Congress will extend the expensing provision indefinitely, once its popularity becomes apparent.

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Rappeport) reports Republicans say that "the tax cuts will essentially pay for themselves by generating robust economic growth," rejecting criticisms of the soon-to-be-unveiled plan and "setting the stage for a fight with Washington's economic scorekeepers – such as the Joint Committee on Taxation and the Congressional Budget Office." According to the Times, Republicans fear that the two bodies "will underestimate the amount of economic growth from their" reforms, which the Administration believes will reach 3%. Other groups are also "urging Republicans to stop relying on the taxation committee, saying it uses an antiquated economic model that underestimates growth." The objections, the piece adds, come "ahead of a big tax week," which includes a two-day House Ways and Means Committee "policy retreat" to discuss tax policy starting Sunday and an anticipated release of the Administration's tax framework on Wednesday.

*Poll Finds 89 Percent Of Voters Support Tax Reform, Simplification.* [The Hill](#) (9/22, Easley) reports the latest Harvard-Harris Poll of 2,177 "registered voters" (9/17-9/20) found that 89 percent of voters surveyed support tax reform. What's more, there is strong support for the Administration's approach, with 58 percent in favor of "lowering corporate rates and incentivizing companies to bring foreign profits back into the country," and 45 percent saying that reform should prioritize simplification, "followed by 31 percent who said reform should aim to stimulate jobs and 24 percent who said it should cut taxes." According to Harvard-Harris co-director Mark

Penn, "support for dropping the top rate back to 35 [percent] in exchange for fewer deductions and for business tax cuts so long as they bring their overseas profits back home." However, he adds, a deduction cap is "the best way to move forward" because the public "is reticent to give up any specific deductions."

**Former Treasury Secretary Provides Principles To Guide Tax Reform.** Former Treasury Secretary Jacob J. Lew writes at the [New York Times](#) (9/22, Lew) on four principles that "should guide Congress in the coming debate" over tax reform. Lew argues that changes "must at least maintain the current levels of progressivity," or it would risk deepening the "income inequality that underlies the anxiety and anger among American voters." Similarly, he says that the "cuts need to be revenue neutral, paid for by reducing tax subsidies, ending loopholes or generating new revenue," or they will "open the door to cuts in basic programs for low- and middle-income families." The reforms must also not open up new loopholes that would facilitate tax evasion. Finally, Lew advises lawmakers to rely on estimates from the Joint Committee on Taxation and the Congressional Budget Office, warning that ignoring their projections "would almost surely produce an explosion of debt."

## Editorial Wrap-Up

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### New York Times.

**"Puerto Rico Is American. We Can't Ignore It Now."** A [New York Times](#) (9/24) editorial urges federal help for Puerto Rico, arguing that while it "cannot vote for president and has no voting representatives in Congress," its citizens "are entitled to the same federal emergency funds and resources that Washington has been funneling to the far more politically powerful and economically resilient states of Texas and Florida in their hurricane miseries."

**"The Day The Real Patriots Took A Knee."** A [New York Times](#) (9/24) editorial says President Trump's remarks about NFL protests "provide further evidence that he has no concern for the legitimate and deeply felt fears and grievances of minority Americans."

**"In Germany, A Victory For Angela Merkel And Populism."** In an editorial, the [New York Times](#) (9/24) says German Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats "came in first in the German national election on Sunday" as anticipated, "assuring her of a fourth term as chancellor." Since "coalition governments are the norm" in Germany, however, "voting is only the start of a process that can take months before a government emerges." Merkel now "faces a formidable challenge," in part because the far-right Alternative for Germany will enter Parliament. The politically greater challenge, the Times says, is the loss of Merkel's "partner, the Social Democrats." The Times says hopefully Merkel's negotiations with potential coalition partners will not result in the "erosion of the values the chancellor has defended in the past" and have "helped Germany, Europe and the world."

### Washington Post.

**"The Is What The Flag Stands For, Mr. President."** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (9/24) says that while it is "embarrassing...to have to explain to the children that we have a president who speaks so rudely," as it is "playing into the diversion he may seek when he finds himself flummoxed by Kim Jong Un or Sen. John McCain," in some ways, "there is nothing more important than his misguided understanding of how to truly respect the flag." The Post adds that "the response to Mr. Trump's ugly tweets and threats, from players and team owners, reflects an encouraging consensus that the real way to respect the American flag is to respect the diversity of opinion it protects."

**"Amid The Russia Probes, Trump Makes An Important Nomination."** The [Washington Post](#) (9/24) says in an editorial that "it comes as welcome news that President Trump has named the well-qualified Adam Klein to chair" the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board, "established on the recommendation of the 9/11 Commission...to provide independent oversight to ensure that national security and counterterrorism programs are conducted with appropriate protections for civil liberties." The board "has been unable to perform its oversight role since January, when two members stepped down," and Klein merits a quick confirmation. The Post says the Administration should also "continue working to get the board to a quorum and fully staff it, consulting with Democratic leaders in Congress to settle on nominees for the board's two minority positions."

**"Good Luck Not Rolling Your Eyes At The Virginia Candidates' Magic Math."** In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (9/24) attacks the "illogic at the heart of" Virginia's Republican gubernatorial candidate Ed Gillespie's tax proposal, "which would reduce income taxes by 10 percent over three

years, costing the state more than \$1.3 billion in annual revenue." The Post editorializes that "by an act of magical thinking," Gillespie says this revenue reduction "wouldn't put a dent in spending." Meanwhile, that tax plan of Democratic candidate Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam is "hardly more tethered to earthly reality," the Post writes. Northam would "scrap the state's 2.5 percent grocery tax for lower-income residents," but he "leaves unexplained which state-supported services would bear the brunt of the giveaway." The Post concludes that "of the two, Mr. Gillespie's plan...is the more fanciful and the more insidious," but each plan "would be given short shrift by lawmakers in Richmond, who know better."

### **Wall Street Journal.**

**"The Politicization Of Everything."** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/24) says in an editorial that the President, NFL players, and the press are mixing politics with sports and the losers are Americans for whom the Sunday games are a break from work and the other divisions of American society.

**"Restoring Due Process."** In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/24) applauds the Education Department's decision on Friday to formally rescind its 2011 "Dear Colleague" guidance on how universities and colleges should adjudicate sexual assault cases under Title IX and argues that the decision represents a return to the rule of law, due process, and the protection of students from provable cases of gender discrimination.

**"Merkeldämmerung."** A [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/24) editorial says the successes of Germany's smaller parties, including the far-right Alternative for Germany, free-market Free Democrats, and the Greens, in Sunday's national election reflect German voters' desire for more competitive politics. The Journal says Germans deserve a more vigorous discussion on European Union reform, and in the face of French President Emmanuel Macron's desire for fiscal integration in the bloc, German politicians should seize on the opportunity posed by Merkel's eventual departure and unveil policies that better address the demographic and competitive challenges facing the nation.

## **Big Picture**

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### **Headlines From Today's Front Pages.**

#### **Wall Street Journal:**

[Merkel's Coalition Wins, But Support Slips](#)  
[German Results Reflect European Unease Over Identity, Economy](#)  
[GOP Health Push Hits More Snags](#)  
[Leveraged Loans On Pace To Top Pre-Financial Crisis Levels](#)

#### **New York Times:**

[Angela Merkel Makes History In German Vote, But So Does Far Right](#)  
[New Order Indefinitely Bars Almost All Travel From Seven Countries](#)  
[Defying Trump, Athletes Intensify Debate On Race And Protest](#)  
[Fueled By Trump's Tweets, Anthem Protests Grow To A Nationwide Rebuke](#)  
[Budget Bus Lines Flout The Rules With Little Consequence](#)  
[Is Trump All Talk On North Korea? The Uncertainty Sends A Shiver](#)

#### **Washington Post:**

[Obama Sought To Prod Facebook On Russia Role](#)  
[Health Bill Fails To Find Support](#)  
[Kushner Used Private Email For His Official Work](#)  
[NFL Players Stand In Solidarity](#)  
[White House Expands Travel Ban, Restricting Eight Countries](#)  
[After Maria, The Misery Deepens](#)

#### **Financial Times:**

[Merkel Set For Fourth Term In Power But Support Weakens Sharply](#)  
[London Accused Of "Bogus" Uber Ruling](#)

#### **Washington Times:**

[Trump's Call For Boycott Of NFL Reignites Furor Over Players' National Anthem Protests](#)  
[Hurricane Relief, 'Chuck And Nancy' Talks Help Lift Trump's Job Approval Ratings](#)

[Republicans Press Ahead With Graham-Cassidy Health Care Bill Despite Mounting Defections In Senate](#)

[Merkel Celebrates Fourth-Term Victory: Right-Wing Nationalists Win Seats In German Parliament](#)  
[Trump Expands Enhanced Vetting To Include Chad, North Korea And Venezuela](#)

***Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:***

**ABC:** White House-NFL Clash; Pro Sports National Anthem Protests; Tennessee Church Shooting; North Korea Threats; Kushner-Private Email Use; Hurricane-Puerto Rico; Hurricane Tracking; Congress-Healthcare Reform Plan; NYC-Drone Crash; White House-New Travel Restriction; Air Show Crash; Coffee Recall; Disabled Veteran Athlete.

**CBS:** White House-NFL Clash; Trump-NFL Relations; John Dickerson-WH NFL Clash, Healthcare, North Korea; White House-New Travel Restriction; Tennessee Church Shooting; Hurricane-Puerto Rico; Mexico City Earthquake; German Election Result; Oprah Interview; Afghan Veteran.

**NBC:** White House-NFL Clash; Tennessee Church Shooting; Congress-Healthcare Reform Plan; German Election Result; Hurricane-Puerto Rico; Germany-ISIS Female Captives Recovery Program; US Spy Satellite Launch; Australia Train Surfing Arrest; Underwater Forest Discovery.

***Network TV At A Glance:***

White House-NFL Clash – 15 minutes, 15 seconds

Hurricane-Puerto Rico – 7 minutes, 25 seconds

***Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:***

**ABC:** White House-NFL Clash; White House-New Travel Restriction; Tennessee Church Shooting; Hurricane.

**CBS:** White House-NFL Clash; White House-New Travel Restriction; Tennessee Church Shooting; US Gasoline Price; Wall Street News.

**FOX:** White House-New Travel Restriction; White House-NFL Clash; Tennessee Church Shooting.

**NPR:** Tennessee Church Shooting; Germany Election Result; White House-NFL Clash; Hurricane.

## Washington Schedule

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### Today's Events In Washington.

**White House:**

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Makes an announcement on the Trump Administration's commitment to equipping the American workforce for jobs of the future; has dinner with grassroots leaders.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Visits NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center; participates in a US Senate Rally for Luther Strange.

**US Senate:** 10:00 AM Senate Finance Committee hearing on 'Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson' health care reform proposal – Hearing on 'Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson Proposal' \* Congressional Republicans are rushing for a vote on the proposal to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act – spearheaded by Republican Sens. Lindsey Graham and Bill Cassidy and co-sponsored by Republican Sens. Dean Heller and Ron Johnson – before the end of the fiscal year 30 Sep, after which the Senate parliamentarian has ruled that any attempt to repeal 'Obamacare' could not be done under the budget reconciliation process and would therefore need 60 votes to overcome procedural votes in the Senate rather than just 51 (or 50, with a casting vote from Vice President Mike Pence) Location: Rm 215, Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC  
<http://finance.senate.gov>

4:00 PM Senate votes on NLRB nominee, and has goal of passing 'Obamacare' repeal bill by the end of the week – Senate convenes, with agenda including resumption of consideration of the nomination of William Emanuel to be a National Labor Relations Board member, including a vote \* Agenda for the week due to include a new proposal to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act – spearheaded by Republican Sens. Lindsey Graham and Bill Cassidy and co-sponsored by Republican Sens. Dean Heller and Ron Johnson – after the Senate parliamentarian ruled that the 'budget reconciliation process' on such a measure expires at the end of the fiscal year 30 Sep, meaning any procedural votes in the chamber after that date would need 60 to pass rather than just 51 (or 50, with a casting vote from Vice President Mike Pence). The proposal has been criticized for lacking protection for people with pre-existing medical conditions, although President Donald Trump has claimed that it does cover them. Between two and four Senate Republicans are likely to oppose the bill, which could see it fall short of the 50-vote threshold Location: Washington, DC [http://www.senate.gov/](http://www.senate.gov)

**US House:** 10:00 AM Reps. Lewis, Kelly, and Demetrius Nash on gun violence. – News conference with Reps. John Lewis & Robin Kelly and Demetrius Nash of Chicago on gun violence prevention. Location: House Triangle.

2:00 PM House of Representatives returns after District Work Period Location: Washington, DC <http://www.house.gov/>

2:00 PM House GOP millennial task force hearing on 'Challenges and Opportunities within the Hydropower Workforce' – House Republican Policy Committee Millennial Task Force hearing on 'Challenges and Opportunities within the Hydropower Workforce', held by Committee Chairman Luke Messer and Task Force Chair Elise Stefanik, with panelists including Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions Director of Policy Charles Hernick, Oak Ridge National Laboratory Research and Development Associate Adam Witt, and Brookfield Renewable Director of Northeast Operations Justin Truedell Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2261, Washington, DC <http://policy.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/GOPpolicy>

5:00 PM House Rules Committee hearing – Hearing on 'H.R. 2824 – Increasing Opportunity through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act' and 'H.R. 2792 – Control Unlawful Fugitive Felons Act of 2017' Location: U.S. Capitol, H-313, Washington, DC <http://www.rules.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/RulesReps>

7:15 PM House Democratic Caucus holds informal reception with media – House Democratic Caucus Chairman Joe Crowley and Vice Chair Linda Sanchez host latest informal, off-the-record reception with reporters and representatives, giving the Capitol Hill press corps an opportunity to socialize with Democratic members Location: HVC-200, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC <http://www.dems.gov/> <https://twitter.com/HouseDemocrats>

**Other:** 12:00 PM Event for media to view NASA spacecraft that will 'touch the sun' – NASA hosts event for media to see the agency's Parker Solar Probe – humanity's first-ever mission to explore the sun's outer atmosphere – and learn about the mission, held at the Johns Hopkins University where the probe is being built \* The spacecraft is in full flight configuration, complete with its revolutionary heat shield, and members of the engineering and science teams are available for interviews Location: Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Laurel, MD <http://www.nasa.gov> <https://twitter.com/NASA>

12:30 PM Democratic Rep. Sander Levin speaks on 'International Trade Policy' at the Council on Foreign Relations Location: Council on Foreign Relations, 1777 F St NW, Washington, DC [www.cfr.org](http://www.cfr.org) <https://twitter.com/CFRLive> #CFRLive

2:00 PM 'Mental Health & The Opioid Crisis' NPC Newsmaker news conference – 'Mental Health & The Opioid Crisis' National Press Club Headliners Newsmaker news conference, with Democratic Rep. Tim Ryan, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Marriage and Family Therapist Jackie Schalit, Kaiser Permanente psychologist Kenneth Rogers, and Oriana House Clinical Coordinator Cuyler Costanzo – discussing the opioid crisis and 'what they see as the lack of parity between mental health and physical healthcare' Location: The National Press Club, 529 14th St NW, Washington, DC <http://press.org/> <https://twitter.com/PressClubDC>

2:00 PM Urban Institute discussion on the role of community development financial institutions – 'Building Healthier Economies with CDFIs' Urban Institute discussion, in collaboration with JPMorgan Chase, to highlight the role community development financial institutions play nationally in creating equity and restarting economic growth. Speakers include Republican Rep. Scott Tipton, JPMorgan Chase Executive Director Colleen Briggs, Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs President and CEO Grace Fricks, Chicago Community Loan Fund President Calvin Holmes, National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders Executive Director Noel Poyo, Community Ventures President and CEO Kevin Smith, Urban Institute Senior Research Associate Brett Theodos, and Urban Institute President Sarah Rosen Wartell Location: Newseum, 555 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC [www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org) <https://twitter.com/urbaninstitute>

4:30 PM Liberian President Sirleaf delivers public address on Capitol Hill – Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf delivers public address on Capitol Hill, hosted by the U.S. Institute of Peace, International Republican Institute, International Foundation for Electoral Systems, National Democratic Institute, National Endowment for Democracy, and Democratic Sen. Chris Coons. She reflects on U.S. support for Liberia under her administration, and calls on the U.S. to 'continue its support for democracy, human rights, and good governance in Africa and around the world'. Other event participants include Sen. Coons and Republican Rep. Ed Royce Location: U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, Auditorium, Washington, DC [www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org) [#SirleafDC](https://twitter.com/USIP)

## Last Laughs

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## **Late Night Political Humor.**

No late-night talk show aired on Sunday night.

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